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The Shape of Things

EVENTS IN PRAGUE PROVIDED A THEATRICAL background for Stalin's urgent invitation to the Finnish President to open negotiations for a friendship pact. Actually, these pacts have become routine: the countries of the Soviet sphere have been laced together by a criss-cross of similar agreements among themselves and between each and Russia. Finland is the only state outside the network, and its inclusion was inevitable. Whether or not Stalin's letter is a first move toward Communist control inside Finland will be revealed in the coming months. So far, Moscow has exercised considerable restraint in its dealings with Helsinki—surprising restraint considering Finland's role in the war and its historical relationship to Russia. But the Czech crisis proves that polite dealings do not rule out Communist domination, and Finland's party is strong and closely tied to Moscow. In any case, the pact will certainly be concluded, and President Paasikivi, who has a record of successful negotiations with Moscow, displays little concern about the result, arguing, no doubt, that by the terms of the armistice Finland was integrated in the Russian defense system about as tightly as it could be.

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IF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN Affairs really expected its hearings to shed light on the Marshall Plan, it must have been bewildered by the last few witnesses. Committee members heard Henry Wallace denounce the European Recovery Program as the creature of "big bankers, monopolists, and militarists." Then came Representative Frederick C. Smith, of Ohio, who solemnly advised them that the program was "outright communism." A third witness told them that while the plan might be *directed* against communism, its effect would be the opposite, because the outlay called for by the Administration could only result in "a depression in the United States more serious and far-reaching than anything we have ever experienced." This view was advanced by Ernest T. Weir, chairman of the National Steel Corporation and one of the "monopolists" who, if Wallace is correct, should be promoting the program with the passion of a zealot. But Weir went farther. "Western Europe will not go communistic," the committee was assured by the steel magnate, whose name was anathema to organized labor in the early days of the New Deal and whose politics have always been right of right. Like Wallace, Weir says the Administration is engaging in "a tremendous propaganda campaign" to frighten the country with the threat of communism. The difference is that while Wallace believes it, Weir, who as an old Liberty Leaguer is a veteran hand at fostering red scares, has other fish to fry. The Marshall Plan, if successful, will in the long run make Western Europe less dependent on American industry than it is today. Weir, like Hoover, would keep Europe hanging on our good-will, a poor relation interminably scraping for crumbs. The prosperity he seeks is the prosperity of monopoly; the depression he professes to fear will in fact be unavoidable if Europe is left too crippled to make its own steel and too poor to buy Mr. Weir's.

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GLEN TAYLOR COULD NOT HAVE PICKED A more unfortunate week to make his plunge into the third party. Having praised President Truman's "excellent domestic program" less than two months ago, the Senator made his decision on the basis of "our present get-tough-with-Russia foreign policy," which he said was a device to achieve our own "aggressive" purposes, the Russians themselves having "good intentions." Consequently, he was reduced to explaining that recent events in Czechoslovakia, which he deplores, would not have occurred "if our foreign policy were not so aggressive." This is the age-old excuse for every international adventure ever perpetrated and could as plausibly be used to justify the Truman Doctrine, which Taylor so properly opposes. In spite of this inauspicious beginning, it is believed in some quarters that the Senator, who knows the vital importance of a good Congress, will prevent the Wallace party from committing a most serious blunder. This is the threatened introduction of independent Congressional candidates in races where progressive Democrats are already slated to run. Taylor expects "to feel good inside" because he is free of the compromised Democratic Party, and he sympathizes with those "Republican liberals who have to swallow and rationalize a program laid down for them by Mr. Pew, Colonel McCormick, Senator Taft, and the National Association of Manufac-

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Editor: Freda Kirchwey

European Editor J. Alvarez del Vayo
Literary Editor Margaret Marshall

Associate Editor: Robert Bendiner
Financial Editor: Keith Hutchison

Drama: Joseph Wood Krutch
Music: B. H. Haggin

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J. King Gordon, Reinhold Niebuhr, Carey McWilliams
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Advertising Manager: Shirley May Segan
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turers." But the Senator's sympathy will be wasted if his own political course extends the power of the Pews, returns McCormick's man Brooks to the Senate, and gives Taft the Presidency. If the new party is prepared to elect a Republican President just to teach the Democrats a lesson, Mr. Taylor may at least induce his colleagues to keep their punishing hand off Congress. Perhaps the Democrats deserve it, but the country doesn't.

*

LANDLORDS HAVE MANY FRIENDS IN THE Eightieth Congress, but not enough who are willing to risk their political necks by abolishing rent control out of hand. Reluctantly, the G. O. P. high command has come to the conclusion that restriction of rents must continue for at least another year. Because the decision was put off as long as possible, a bill simply extending for one month the 1947 act, which expired February 29, had to be rushed through both houses last week. In supporting this measure, Jesse P. Wolcott, chairman of the House Banking Committee, said it gave Congress an opportunity to study the effects of the recent commodity slump before taking final action. Presumably, he thinks that if a real recession is coming, landlords will be discouraged from raising rents. But that would happen only if unemployment forced large numbers of workers to vacate their present homes, leading to even more "doubling up" than at present. This kind of depression doesn't seem to be imminent, and if it is, Congress had better think of a better way to check it than the restoration of a free market in housing. To do the Senate justice, it has made more progress on the rent question than the House. Last week, it passed a bill continuing control for fourteen months.

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THE ONLY SAFE WAY TO PUT A TERM TO rent control is to build enough houses at reasonable rents and so reduce the terrific pressure on the market. In a message to Congress, the President has again asked for early legislation designed to encourage intensive housing construction. He pointed out that of the million dwelling units added to the supply last year only 15 per cent were built for rental. The rest were offered for sale, usually at prices far beyond the reach of those most in need of homes. Two and a half million married couples, Mr. Truman said, were being forced to live with other families; five million homes now occupied were below minimum standards of health and decency. Such figures, coupled with a record birth rate, indicate that there is nothing extravagant in his assertion that we need one million new houses annually for ten years. His proposals for immediate action include a large increase in federal funds for home-mortgage loans and financial assistance to local housing authorities to permit the erection of 100,000 units a year for the next ten years.

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Meanwhile, Republican Senator McCarthy of Wisconsin has introduced a bill which seeks to provide 1,500,000 houses a year for ten years by the wholesale subsidizing of private investors. Builders of low-rental homes would be guaranteed 3½ to 5 per cent profit on their outlay together with income-tax exemption on the earnings of such projects. In some way not quite clear, the bill also seeks to induce local authorities to offer builders of low-rental houses additional benefits, such as relief from real-estate taxes, land, and cash. Possibly such a program, which appears to do away with any risk whatever to the investor, would produce results. But for the same cost, we believe, the government could provide more and better houses through existing public housing authorities.

Congress and Science

IF A National Science Foundation is to be established this year, its supporters had better get busy. Although the White House, interested Senate and House Republicans, and representative scientists have apparently at last agreed on a bill to create a Science Foundation, its passage at this session of Congress is by no means certain. The Republican leadership on Capitol Hill has no liking for it. This being a Presidential year, moreover, Congress will wind up serious law-making by the end of May—and the bill has not yet been introduced.

Last summer, President Truman vetoed the Science Foundation measure handed him by Congress on the ground that the administrative set-up provided was unworkable and unconstitutional. The bill specified that the director was to be appointed, not by the President, but by a nine-man executive committee named by the foundation's twenty-four-man governing board. Subsequently, Republican Senator Smith of New Jersey, sponsor of the bill, and Chairman Wolverton of the House Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee met twice with Budget Director James E. Webb and Dr. John R. Steelman, representing the White House, and with Dr. Harlow Shapley, spokesman for the Inter-Society Committee of scientific groups. As a result of these meetings, Smith and Wolverton agreed to change the bill so that the director would be appointed by the President.

After the first conference with Steelman, Smith was sharply reprimanded by the Senate Republican leadership for dealing with the White House on his own and was told he could not commit the party to support of a bill. The second meeting, therefore, served only to tell Senate Republicans what the President wanted. This they are not disposed to grant: they have no desire to give Truman twenty-five desirable appointments—twenty-four members of the board and the director—in a campaign year. Unless effective pressure is brought to bear, they will simply wait until a Republican may be in the White House. Nor is Congress in any hurry to create a foundation which will do no military research. Smith's original bill proposed a military division, but this has been eliminated on the ground that the military is already taken care of.

It is all too true that military research is amply provided for. The army, navy, and air force have such huge funds at their disposal that they are steadily winning control of American science. They now pay for 40 per cent of all research and development activities in the United States and for more than 50 per cent of the research carried on in universities. Every day, more university laboratories, unable to obtain money elsewhere, sign up with the military. Long-term contracts are replacing short-term commitments, and the percentage of secret contracts is increasing. The best way to counter this ominous trend, which means the gradual militarization of science, is to set up a National Science Foundation. The revised Smith bill should be passed at once.

How to Save Partition

LAST week at Lake Success, the State Department initiated a move designed (1) to destroy the Palestine partition resolution of November 29; (2) to smash the unity between the United States and the Soviet Union on the Palestine question; (3) to provoke a Soviet veto in the Security Council; (4) to start a series of acts leading to a stalemate and the ultimate commitment of the whole problem to the Trusteeship Council, on which the Soviet Union is not represented. That the pledged word of the United States would be dishonored by these tactics, and President Truman's election chances ruined, apparently seemed to the State Department a small price to pay for bringing Palestine and the Middle East within the scope of the Truman Doctrine.

This is the real meaning of the declaration of Ambassador Austin in the Security Council on February 24 and of the subsequent American resolution.

It is no accident that within a few days of these initial moves Secretary Marshall announced that new military appropriations for Greece and Turkey must be voted; that, on February 27 in Beirut, a spokesman for a War Department investigating commission stated that the partition of Palestine would endanger American security and interests in the Middle East; that in the same week the Arab League declared no oil pipe lines would be permitted through the Arab states as long as partition stood. These announcements must be understood for what they are—maneuvers carefully planned to justify a reversal of the American position.

Any doubts concerning this intention were rapidly re-

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solved in the private briefing conferences held on February 24 with selected newspaper correspondents in Washington and at Lake Success by Under Secretary of State Lovett and Dean Rusk, legal counsel to the American delegation. Their explanations, later cautiously confirmed by members of the Middle Eastern staff of the State Department, were as follows: that no serious attempt at reconciliation between Arabs and Jews had been made and this should now be undertaken; that the United States was firmly opposed to the imposition of partition by force and, if necessary, would use the veto to prevent it; that the United States was considering the possibility of asking the British to remain in Palestine after May 15; that the establishment of a trusteeship for Jerusalem opened the possibility of trusteeship for the whole region. These statements were cushioned by reiterated protestations of adherence to the November 29 resolution and of hope that, once peace was restored, partition could be effected without force.

IT IS reported that, before leaving for his vacation, President Truman instructed the State Department to draw up a directive to the American delegation in favor of partition and of an international police force. After his departure, according to this story, Loy Henderson, head of the Middle Eastern Division, Charles E. Bohlen, the department's Russian expert, and Under Secretary Lovett, with help from the legal staff, concocted a formula, and won Secretary Marshall's adherence to it, which became the basis for the United States position in the Security Council.

In essence, Mr. Austin's statement and the subsequent reversal of the American position themselves constituted a move for revision. They bore no relation to the issues presented to the Security Council in the two reports of the Palestine Commission. In these reports, the commission charged the British with non-compliance with the resolution of November 29 and accused the Palestinian Arabs and the Arab states of armed revolt against it. Moreover, the commission asked for an international force, underscoring the point that "the only way of implementing the plan of partition as it has been envisaged by the Assembly consists of providing for assistance by non-Palestinian military forces available not in some symbolical form but in effective, adequate strength."

Dr. Alfonso Lopez of Colombia cynically exposed the real intention of the State Department when he urged that a Security Council committee should consider the advisability of calling an extraordinary session of the General Assembly to review the partition resolution, and called upon the British to postpone the end of their mandate. American opposition developed, not to the sense of the Lopez proposal, but to its timing.

The State Department has no real desire to have its resolution passed by the Council. American-Russian unity on Palestine has been difficult for the department to swallow. The resolution provides an extremely shrewd round-about means of ending it. Knowing that the Russians will understand the resolution as an attempt at revision, department officials are hopeful that Gromyko will oppose it. Since the resolution is of a substantive nature, a negative vote would constitute a veto. If the Russians fall into this trap, it is they who will have broken unity and created a stalemate.

To meet that eventuality, members of the legal staff of the American delegation, with the help of members of the Argentine delegation, are planning further moves. They want to call a special session of the General Assembly to deal not only with Palestine but with Greece, Korea, and Indonesia. This could be brought about by a simple majority vote of the member states, polled by mail. In such a session, the Russians would be placed in the awkward position of supporting a U. N. Commission for Palestine while refusing to recognize the authority of similar commissions in Greece, Korea, and Indonesia. It would be very easy to attack partition as a wedge for Russian penetration of the Middle East. In which case, enough pressure could probably be brought on various delegations to reverse the November 29 resolution and relegate the entire issue to the Trusteeship Council.

If the American resolution should by any chance be carried, the State Department has another scheme: induce the Jewish Agency to give up half the area assigned to the Jewish state and use this as a bribe to win Arab acquiescence in a compromise. The Jews would be asked to give up the Negev, Haifa, and Galilee. Members of the American staff at Lake Success have even gone so far as to wager that a Jewish compromise would be produced within a week. Shertok's declaration that "the partition plan is to us the last and final compromise" must have been a shock.

REVERSAL of the November 29 resolution is not inevitable. The State Department can be defeated by the President, the Jews of Palestine, and the United Nations, if all three act with vigor and speed.

If the President has been betrayed, it is his duty to fire those responsible, beginning with Loy Henderson, whose term of service in this country expires April 1. It is not too late for Mr. Truman to issue a new directive to the United States delegation reaffirming the American position and approving the international force asked for by the Palestine Commission. Nor is it too late to initiate Council action against the Arab states responsible for the revolt against partition and to call for an end to British sabotage. The American public can help force the hand of the President by demanding Congressional action to prevent this betrayal of American pledges. The Jews of Palestine can help produce U. N. action by

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forming a provisional council of government in accordance with the original resolution. The thirty member states of the U. N. which joined the Big Three in voting for partition can and should make a direct request for implementation to the Security Council.

Finally, the U. N. Commission itself should exercise its authority, recognized even by the British, as the implementing arm of the U. N. in this matter. It should ask why its authority is being superseded by the new United States resolution. It can and should act to make the partition a *fait accompli* by recognizing a provisional council of government for the Jewish state. If the commission cannot go to Palestine, chosen representatives of the Jewish community can come to Lake Success.

One thing is certain: if nothing is done and the State Department achieves its objective of killing partition, there will be not peace in the Middle East but war.

Prague—a Lesson for Liberals

By FREDA KIRCHWEY

FOR democrats, and particularly for democrats who accept the reality of the revolution through which the Old World is struggling, it is not enough to denounce the Communist coup in Prague. What is needed is a supreme effort to understand why it happened and to grasp its meaning in terms of future policy. Otherwise, the Czechoslovak crisis may start a swing to the right, both here and abroad, more disastrous in the end than the event itself.

What Russia hopes to gain from the overthrow is not apparent—at least in the short run. Probably the Soviet leaders considered it safer to eliminate even the chance of a shift of policy resulting from an electoral upset in May, while the Czech Communists were determined to make such an upset impossible. If the cost of this course is to create anti-Russian feeling where none previously existed, and a consequent need for stronger measures of repression, the new regime is evidently ready to meet it.

The change came about, under a cloak of formal legality, with a minimum of public disturbance. Czechs generally are undoubtedly bewildered by the speed and smoothness with which the thing was accomplished, by the acquiescence of President Benes and the Socialist leadership, and above all on account of their own stubborn belief in the good faith of the Soviet government. A people conditioned for years to this attitude is not to be converted overnight to hostility or suspicion. But by the same token a people bred in the democratic tradition and hardened by resistance to foreign dictatorship will make no easy shift to dictatorial control, whatever the label it masquerades under.

Premier Gottwald's promise of "constitutional parliamentary methods" will apply, it is already clear, only to persons and policies that meet the Communist definition of "democratic." Since this is the best that can be hoped for, the decision of the Socialists to join the new coalition and of Benes and Masaryk to remain in office can be explained only as an effort to temper the effects of a change that could not in any case be averted. To have withdrawn would have dramatized the reality behind the legal front but, as Benes said, at the risk of creating "chaos."

Indeed, the defeat of Czech democracy has been facilitated by the very character of the people and the democratic parties: they have no heart to rebel, individually or en masse, against an action taken by fellow-citizens with whom, until yesterday, they cooperated for common ends—even though that action means their own political submergence. To fight back would certainly involve collaboration with small but aggressive right-wing groups—Czech and Slovak fascists, reactionary Catholics, left-over collaborationists—whose machinations, both real and invented, have been used by the Communists to justify their forcible reorganization of the government. One cannot imagine Czech democrats in or out of office taking up the weapon of reaction. They will prefer to temporize, even to cooperate where possible, in the hope of moderating the pace and violence of revolutionary change.

BUT this is not the only reason the democratic leaders of Czechoslovakia have accepted the Communist dictate. A more profound cause lies in the attitude of Washington and London. Editorial writers in the Western press are making much of the ostensible parallel with Munich; none of them stretch the comparison far enough. At Munich, Benes surrendered to Hitler, but he was betrayed by the West. Let this thought linger a moment in the minds of our statesmen as they dispatch smug and futile protests to Premier Gottwald. Or let their memories lead them back to a more exact replica of events in Prague—to the day in 1919 when the liberal Premier of Hungary, Count Michael Karolyi—relinquished his republican government to the Communist, Bela Kun, after desperate, unsuccessful efforts to win Western backing for his weak but democratic regime. When the Communists took over, the Western powers issued blasts against the red terror; but Horthy soon followed, and they were perfectly satisfied.

From the moment the Benes government came to power, Washington has consistently treated it as a Russian puppet, nothing more. It has used its immense economic power to weaken the Czech regime by refusing loans and credits, putting obstacles in the way of trade,

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shutting off relief at the earliest possible moment. Distinguished envoys of the Prague government have met rebuffs rather than helpfulness. And now, our officials drop crocodile tears on the tomb of "Czech democracy"! One can imagine the weary cynicism with which Jan Masaryk must have read the three-power blast directed at the new regime.

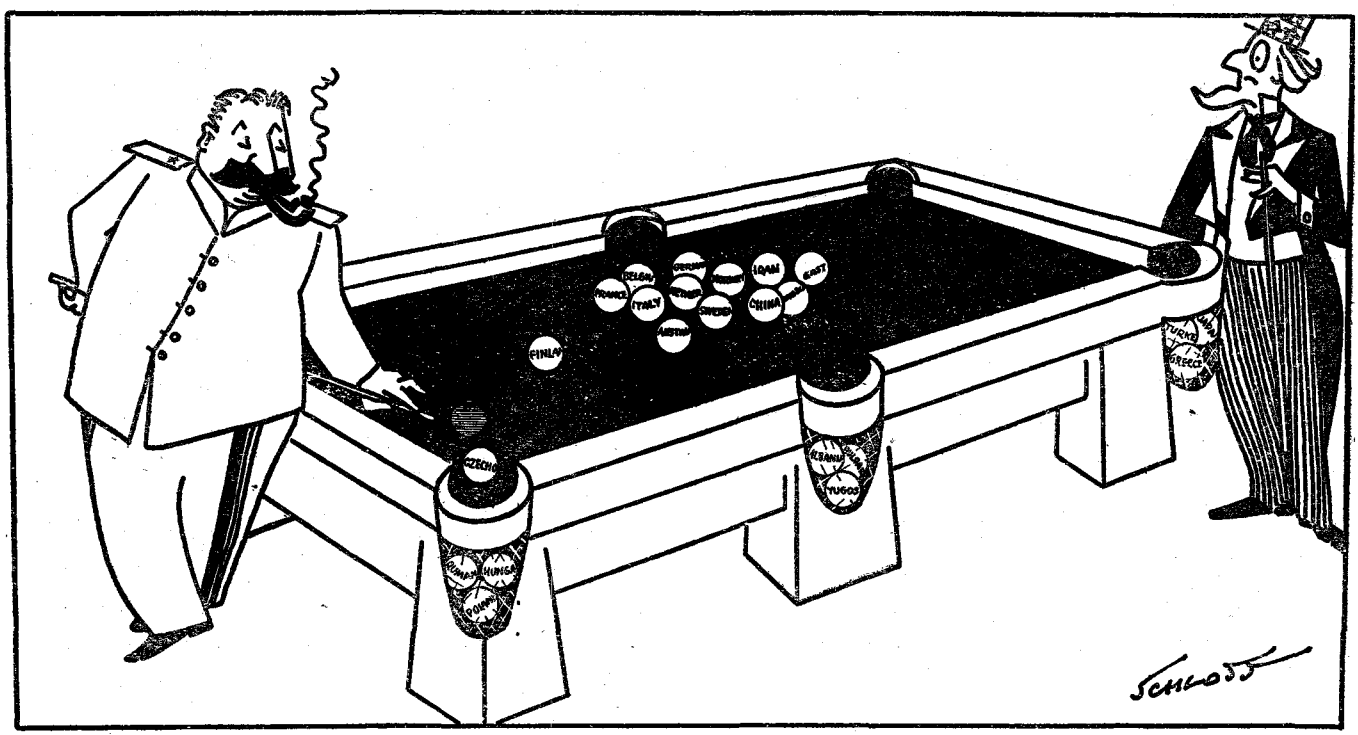
Is this to be the American role wherever the great issue is joined—to weaken or openly fight the democratic forces in each country and so help prepare the way for dictatorship? And then to view the outcome with alarm, and remonstrate, and blame the victim for not making a bold stand?

THERE is only one way to check the spread of communism—and Moscow's power—across Europe. It is the way described in Fritz Sternberg's new book "How to Stop the Russians—Without War."* With force and great economy of language, Dr. Sternberg elaborates the thesis he has often stated in *The Nation:* the bankruptcy of pre-war capitalism in Europe; the impossibility of restoring it, even with American money, since its essential foundations in colonialism and cheap labor are gone forever; the necessity of encouraging positively, rather than balking or merely tolerating, the establishment of democratic socialism in a united Europe. Only so can American energy and dollars create a viable economy and serve the ends of peace.

This, of course, is the moral that Czechoslovakia flings in our face. We prepare to fight Russia; we arm our own satellite to hold the line against Moscow's satellites in Greece; we send planes and money to keep the troops of Chiang Kai-shek in the field against the Communists. We withhold credits from Czechoslovakia lest their benefits somehow percolate through to Moscow or advance socialism. We subsidize reactionaries in Italy and order the French and Italian governments to rid themselves of Communists—in the name of democracy. We pour gold into the treasuries of greedy Arab rulers. We put the old German industrialists in power in the Ruhr to pave the way for future Wall Street investments. But where on the globe are American strength and wealth enlisted in the fight against clerical reaction, or royalist corruption, or landlordism, or moneylenders?

The E. R. P. is the one device proposed since we killed UNRRA that could be made a positive instrument for democratic reconstruction in Europe and Asia. But this, too, can be used to restore and prop up reaction in Western Europe—opening wide the way to eventual Communist domination—unless our leaders somehow learn the lesson of the Czechoslovak overthrow. Sternberg's powerful tract for our times should be put into the hands of all those statesmen and publicists who, fearing communism, throw up hasty Maginot lines of money and guns. It offers them, not the simple doctrine of being nice to Russia, but a concrete and substantial plan whereby the valid democratic energies of the world can be given the strength necessary to resist Communist pressure or the opposite threat—even more imminent in the West—of fascist reaction.

*Interested readers can get Fritz Sternberg's book, "How to Stop the Russians—Without War" (John Day), by sending $2 to Readers' Service, *The Nation,* 20 Vesey Street, New York 7, N. Y.



THE OLD MASTER

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The Sickness of American Culture

BY REINHOLD NIEBUHR

MOST of the ills of Western culture are due to the inability of man to master either the social and political complexities or the spiritual perplexities which have been introduced into life by the phenomenal expansion of technics in modern civilization. The specific ills of American culture, in so far as they can be distinguished from the general sickness of the Western world, must be ascribed to the wider scope of technics here, their greater obvious success, and the correspondingly more dangerous illusions and confusions created by man's increasing mastery over nature. Every thoughtful foreign observer notes a curious combination of pride and insecurity in our national character. The pride is quite obviously derived from our superior technical achievements. Our phenomenal power of production, added to the wealth of our natural resources, has made us economically supreme at the precise moment in history when economic supremacy can be easily translated into military and political supremacy. Our inner insecurity has less obvious sources. Could it be that we are darkly conscious that the mastery of nature and the accumulation of power solves no ultimate problem of human existence? that it teaches us how to live neither with ourselves nor with our fellow-men? that it may, on the contrary, increase the sharpness of these problems without offering any additional insight for their solution? Does our insecurity combine the awkwardness of an adolescent with a mature apprehension of how difficult it is to bring our new powers into any kind of order or to find life meaningful amid these complexities?

For the sake of clarity it may be well to draw a distinction between the level of our culture which is concerned with the immediate problems of human community in a technical age—the moral and political level—and that concerned with the ultimate meaning of our existence—art, philosophy, and religion.

On the first level European civilization has been involved in a war between two political and moral creeds, one upheld chiefly by the bourgeoisie, the other by the industrial workers. The two creeds are almost equally erroneous, and the internecine strife between factions which have countered half-truth with half-truth has created, or at least aggravated, the chaos of international relations. The creed of the middle class today is the creed of classical liberalism. According to that creed it is not necessary to be concerned too much about the problems of justice and brotherhood in an age of technics. All these new powers of man are believed to be governed by a mysterious natural harmony. In the history of mankind this harmony supposedly operates through the automatic processes of a free market and a generally uncontrolled expression of competitive economic interests —uncontrolled, they are supposed to check one another.

There is a curious irony in the fact that this theory, which wrongly equates history with nature and assumes that human powers and impulses are subject to the same limits which operate in nature, should have been propounded at the precise moment in history when a technical civilization would prove how unbounded human power may become, even as all history has proved how unbounded human ambitions may be. Adam Smith, father of the classical liberal theory, was a contemporary of James Watt, the inventor of the steam engine, at the University of Glasgow. That fact points up the irony nicely, for the steam engine typifies the whole industrial development which made nonsense of Adam Smith's theory. A technical civilization accentuated rather than mitigated the disproportions of economic power which existed in an undynamic agrarian society. Thus a bourgeois world, dreaming of achieving "liberty, equality, and fraternity," developed such monstrous disproportions of social and economic power as to threaten not only the security of those who lacked power but the stability of society itself. The creed of classical liberalism created complacency at the precise moment when Western man should have been morally and politically alert. The drives of human society require management just as much as the impulses of the individual. Without such management they lead to anarchy or tyranny or both.

THE theory of course contained some truth. The various processes of a technical society are too intricate to be placed under the control of either the simple moral maxims or the simple political controls which sufficed medieval culture in dealing with an agrarian economy. But there was more error than truth in the theory. And it was the error rather than the truth which prompted the plutocratic oligarchy in Western society to espouse it and use it as an instrument for making its inordinate power acceptable. It was the truth in it, however, which made this pretension plausible to the millions who had no power to set against power and could therefore not achieve the promised harmony of interests.

This is the first of a series of articles on American culture. Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., Jacques Barzun, Lionel Trilling, and Margaret Marshall will carry on the discussion in coming issues.

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Sooner or later the error was bound to be exposed. But Marxism, which exposed it, wrapped the new truth in an equally grievous error. History is not a realm of harmony but of class conflict, said Marx—which was true, though the conflicts in human society are not as purely economic as he supposed and the class structure is more intricate than the two opposing classes he envisaged. Modern technical society, said Marx, would move toward catastrophe rather than toward greater harmony —which was true. From this conflict the proletarian class, he said, was fated by history to emerge victorious—which was false. But this miscalculation was minor compared with his basic error. Marxism believed that the institution of property had thrown the apple of discord into the world and that the abolition of property would usher in an idyllic society of brotherly love, in which each would give according to his ability and take according to his need. If a period of dictatorship intervened no one would have to worry, since the whole state apparatus would wither away with the victory of its cause and the universal abolition of property.

Property, however, is not the cause but the instrument of human egotism. It may, in moderate forms, be a weapon of defense against the aggression of others; in inordinate forms it is the engine of injustice. In any case the abolition of property is not tantamount to the abolition of economic power. The power is there. And if it is wielded by an oligarchy in the state, that oligarchy acquires political power also. The tyranny which has in fact emerged from Marxist theory was implicit in these two Marxist errors—the error of assuming an economic institution to be the sole cause of strife among men, and the error of assuming that its abolition would either destroy or equate all forms of economic power.

As political theories Marxism and classical liberalism are antithetical. As moral and religious theories—and they are moral and religious theories—they are very much alike. Both are evasions of the deeper problems which all men face in seeking a tolerable harmony with their fellow-men. Both obscure the fact that the root of man's lust for power and of his cruel and self-righteous judgments on his fellows is in himself and not in some social or economic institution. If man understands that fact he can use and refashion political and economic institutions to harness, deflect, or suppress human egotism. If he does not understand it, civil wars arise between those who regard some institution, such as property, as the root of all social virtue and those who regard it as the root of all social injustice.

Britain and continental Europe are trying to achieve economic security and political stability in terms of pragmatic democratic and socialist politics which avoid the errors of these liberal and Marxist dogmatisms. This is particularly true of Britain; on the Continent the ideological civil war of the past century makes the process more difficult. But Britain and the Continent lack the political and economic power to do as they like. Their political life is harassed by two great giants who incarnate these discredited theories.

Since we are dealing with the sickness of American and not of Russian culture, we may dismiss at this moment the pathetic mixture of moral cynicism and utopian illusion which characterizes Russian culture. What is noteworthy in the American attitude toward the moral and political problems of a technical society is that our business oligarchy, though power in industry is more centralized here than in any other Western nation, worships or pretends to worship the tenets of classical liberalism. We express our faith in democracy in such excessively libertarian terms as to make it irrelevant to the rest of the Western world. For this world, trying desperately to restore its broken communities, is unable to believe that harmony and justice are the inevitable by-products of freedom and the automatic balances of a free-market economy. I doubt that any modern nation could produce hymns to freedom so shamelessly loaded with ideological taint as those with which the National Association of Manufacturers promises abundance and happiness to all if only we will let everyone do what he wants in regard to the control and use of his property.

While our business oligarchy publicly proclaims its optimism it privately hedges against a possible inflation. This public optimism joined to private pessimism is one, perhaps superficial, aspect of the dangerous conflict in our soul. We do not believe in ourselves and in our institutions as firmly as we profess. If we did, our conflict with Russia would not produce so much hysteria.

Unfortunately, the critics of the pretensions and illusions of the capitalist economy have had difficulty in expressing their dissent without embracing the illusions of the opposite creed. While there is not much Marxism among the workers of America there is a great deal among the intellectual critics of capitalist culture. There is also much confusion, generated by the debate between disillusioned Marxists and those who hold desperately to their dogma, no matter how implausible it becomes in the light of Russian policy. For this reason it has been difficult to lay the basis of a robust, pragmatic opposition to the older liberalism. Thus the nation is drifting toward social disaster without a considered alternative to present policies.

IN THE field of "pure" culture the distinctive features of the American scene are also determined by the greater impact of technics upon our world. While the introduction of technics into the realm of art necessarily creates the problem of the vulgarization of art, the problem is sharper here than elsewhere. Hollywood has become a symbol to the whole world of the danger of reducing the content of works of art transmitted by

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mass media to some lowest common denominator. The contempt which both Europe and Asia express for the American movie's slickness and vulgarity, its empty sentimentality and banal identification of luxury with success, is to be sure not altogether genuine. We did not invent the problem of a creative use of leisure in a technical society, and if we are the purveyors we are not the only consumers of the pabulum by which this leisure is beguiled. Europe's contempt for the art standards of our moving pictures is laced with envy. Many a critic is not quite sure whether he despises American movies for their standards or because they are unavailable to an impoverished world. Yet we can hardly deny that the vulgarization of art by mass media has gone farther among us than in Europe. Only our journalism, at least in its best exemplars, rates higher than that of Europe.

But such vulgarization of art is a comparatively minor aberration in our culture. More serious is the deleterious effect of a technical rationalism upon all the deeper issues of life. It is still the fond illusion of most of our social scientists that historical and human phenomena can be reduced to dimensions which will allow just such confident generalizations as are the very stuff of the natural sciences. Fortunately, our novelists and other artists do not take this idea too seriously. Otherwise they would not be able to create at all. But the effort to comprehend the human world in its individual and collective richness and variety from the standpoint of a rationalism nurtured in man's approach to nature has had an injurious effect upon our whole culture. It is difficult to present the ambiguity of human motives from the standpoint of such presuppositions. It is even more difficult to give an account of the tragic conflict of loyalties and values in which human beings are constantly involved, a conflict which no amount of rational analysis or prudential action can resolve.

Many good novels are written on limited themes, but few of them rise to the level of presenting life in all of its beauty and terror and in the curious mingling of the two. A culture which has officially disavowed the tragic sense of life does not find it easy to deal with life's deeper perplexities without despair or with its nobilities without sentimentality. If the artist has a sense of pity for mankind he is inclined to make his characters too obviously pathetic, as Steinbeck does. If he wants to arouse admiration for man's more generous qualities he too often gives us sentimental fools from never-never land, as Saroyan does. If heroism in defiance of malignant circumstance is portrayed, it becomes equated with toughness, as in Hemingway—Hemingway knows how to challenge the official optimism of our culture but only by standing on the edge of the despair expressed by one of his heroines in the words: "Life is just a dirty trick." While many novels seem to present life in too simple

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terms, someone always manages to write one in which psychiatry is explicitly introduced, as if a rational analysis of the labyrinth of subrational human motives could substitute for an artistic projection of the complexity and unity of human personality.

IT IS just as difficult to deal with human enterprise in its wider aspects as with individual personality if one must start from the presuppositions of the eighteenth-century culture which still flourishes in America. No great novel with the recent war as its theme has been written or is likely to be written. The theme of Tolstoy's "War and Peace" was the paradoxical relation between human decisions and historical destiny—the desires and decisions of men, with their narrow objectives, were seen to be overruled by the wider purposes of history. Modern man's sense of historical destiny is usually comprehended in the idea of progress. But the catastrophes of our era do not fit into that pattern. The modern Russian novelist can present the war simply as a heroic defense of Communist civilization against "fascist vipers," and the Western novelist can present it as a war for the defense of democracy. But these portrayals are too simple to do justice to the depth of our tragedy or to the complex historical patterns of our chaos.

On the whole, modern man is too strong a voluntarist to be concerned with historical destiny. Our culture will therefore produce many more schemes for world government than works of art in which the dilemma of modern man is adequately presented. For these schemes for world government are the final efforts of rational men to bring the intractable forces of history under the dominion of human reason by creating a constitutional logic plausible enough to overcome the sense of insecurity and the lust for power of great nations. The fact that such schemes end by dividing the world more absolutely than it is now divided, all in the name of a global ideal, illustrates our real situation, particularly man's ambiguous relation to historical destiny. Only a great artist could describe this combination of freedom over and subjection to historical forces. The confident credos by which modern men have lived will have to disintegrate still farther before we shall be able to survey our situation in its true grandeur and tragedy.

If our men of affairs betray a curious schizophrenia between their public optimism and their private apprehensions about the future of our economic and political institutions, the contradiction on the higher levels of our culture are even more serious. America is supposedly a young and optimistic nation, fortunately free of the canker of disillusionment and world-weariness which allegedly infects a decadent European culture. Actually, Europe, with all the poverty and confusion of its external life, is closer to achieving a working faith which comprehends the meaning of life, despite its tragedies, than we are. Under our youthful buoyancy, made possible by the too simple meaning given to life, there is a sense of complete meaninglessness.

Britain Under Rationing

BY WILLIAM R. AMBERSON

FOR many months British journalists, politicians, and physicians have been debating whether or not their country's diet is adequate. Opinions have ranged all the way from John Strachey's assurance to the House of Commons that "this country need have no doubt whatever of its ability to obtain an ample food supply in the coming year" to the fearful charge of Lord Woolton, his predecessor in office, that Britain is "dying of starvation."

In attempting to decide the matter the first step must be to learn the average number of calories the people are getting. This information may be found in the classical monograph of Sir John Boyd Orr, "Food, Health, and Income" (Macmillan, 1937), and in the recent official report on "Food Consumption Levels in the United Kingdom" (His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1947), which together supply the following figures:

Period	*Calories*
1909-13	3,057
1924-28	3,139
1934-38	3,000
1939-46	2,887
1946-47 (provisional)	2,880

The calorie values are obtained by dividing the sum total of all known or estimated supplies, native and imported, expressed in calories, by the number of days and then by the number of inhabitants. No allowance is made for waste or loss at any level. Actual average consumption, therefore, must be lower than the figures indicate. The 1936 studies of Widdowson and McCance, recently recalculated, show that the average consumption

WILLIAM R. AMBERSON is professor of physiology at the School of Medicine of the University of Maryland. He recently spent six months in England and on the Continent studying dietary conditions.

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of sixty-three middle-class women was 2,039 calories, the individual amounts ranging from 1,376 to 2,923. Recent declines in total calories are due entirely to the fat shortage.

Average calories, however, tell only a formal and incomplete story. Actually two dietary revolutions have occurred in Britain since 1909. The first was the wider use of vegetables other than potatoes and of fruit, milk, butter and margarine, eggs, and cheese, which produced a very substantial improvement in health after World War I. This shift did not greatly change the total number of calories consumed but caused a considerable rise in vitamin and mineral intake. The favorable trend was aided by better living conditions, the result of slum clearance and suburban development, and by higher real wages, a decline in the birth rate, and the diffusion of dietary knowledge. The most striking evidence of the improvement in health is found in statistics for school children, whose heights and weights significantly increased. Yet in 1937 Orr concluded that "the diet of nearly one-half of the population, though sufficient to satisfy hunger, is deficient for health." As his standard of health he chose "a state of well-being such that no improvement can be effected by a change in the diet." He considered this condition to be the physiological ideal for mankind.

The second revolutionary change was the introduction of a rationing system, begun in World War I and extended in World War II, which delivers predetermined amounts of the basic foodstuffs to every home. This program has partially rectified the dietary deficiencies of the working classes. Continued in peace time by common consent, it is supplying more food to the lower third of the population (Orr's income groups I and II) than these people ever received before. Controlled prices and government subsidies have brought rationed goods within the reach of all. The average caloric value of the ration has been until recently between 1,700 and 1,800; adolescents and adults require unrationed supplements, which are available in one form or another. While lower-income groups have been benefited, higher-income groups have barely maintained their former intake of basic foodstuffs (groups III and IV) or have experienced a substantial reduction (groups V and VI). The well-to-do classes have, however, been able to obtain unrationed foods and restaurant meals. The social balance is partly restored by free milk and cheap lunches in the schools and by canteen services in shop and factory.

In several respects the rationing system was devised more in the spirit of social equalitarianism than along physiological lines. A large adult receives no extra ration, although his basal-metabolism rate may exceed the average by 25 per cent or more. The new-born infant has received almost as many calories (1,176) as the adult (1,842). Similar generous rations are allotted to children up to three years of age (1,745); until this age the ration is more than the children need or can consume. From the fourth to the seventeenth year rations somewhat exceed what adults receive, rising to a maximum in adolescence (2,279). From the fourth to the tenth year they constitute an adequate diet, without unrationed supplements. (These calorie values are the ones that were in force in November, 1946. They are given in detail by Bransby and Magee in the *British Medical Journal*, April 18, 1947.)

The assignment of surplus rations to the smaller children gives them very adequate protection in any well-ordered home. The practice also leads to the phenomenon of the "family pool," into which go the children's surpluses and from which are drawn extra provisions for adolescents and grown-ups. This arrangement creates an incentive for marriage and child-bearing and may be contributing to the current rise in the birth rate. The term "pool," however, is rather a misnomer, since it connotes a depth and volume for the family which has hardly been present in the past and certainly lacking this winter.

THE detection and measurement of malnutrition in its early stages is a difficult problem. War-time experience has demonstrated that a tolerable life is possible at a level of health much below that optimal state of well-being which Orr took for his goal. *Lancet* remarked editorially on August 9, 1947, that "a clinical assessment of nutrition cannot be satisfactorily made when, as is the case in this country, the level of food consumption is at least sufficient to prevent deficiency symptoms. Short of such deficiency, however, there may be reduction in physiological efficiency." There is reason to believe that among the first symptoms of malnutrition are mental changes, including a loss of memory and a weakening of the will, which defy objective test.

Since this discussion, however, is not concerned with the assessment of malnutrition in any individual person or in any particular year but with group averages over a long period, one may accept the view of many authorities that the heights and weights of school children are as dependable an index of a nation's nutritional state as can be found. Statistics for a number of city school systems are available. In 1937 Orr compared such data for the general population with measurements made in a large public school,* Christ's Hospital, and in a more select public school (unnamed). He noted that public-school students were taller and heavier than pupils in city schools and drew the conclusion that the nutrition of the general population was not adequate, according to his standard. Orr's graphs do not, however, show the marked improvement which occurred shortly before the time of his study, 1926 to 1935. He remarks

* British term for a private preparatory school for boys.

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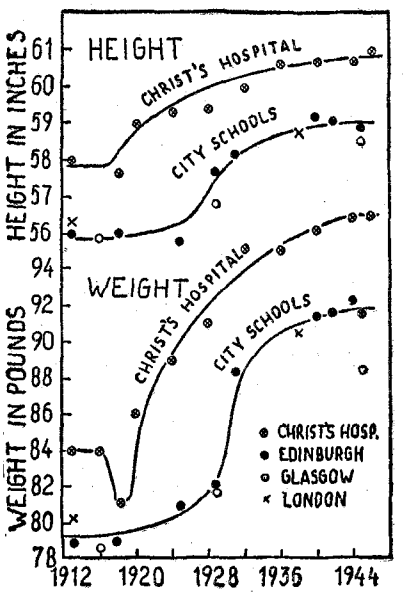
in his text that "it appears that in the last fifty years, though the average height for all classes has risen, there has been no marked change in the order of differences between the classes."

The most carefully kept and trustworthy data on school children's heights and weights are found in the records of Dr. Gerald Friend, physician to Christ's Hospital School from 1913 to 1946 and author of the dietary study "The Schoolboy, a Study of his Nutrition, Physical Development, and Health" (Heffer and Sons, Cambridge, 1935). Dr. Friend has kindly supplied me the recent figures for Christ's Hospital pupils—to July 31, 1946—which are shortly to be published in a revision of his book. Data for city school systems, while covering many more pupils, are less complete. In London only two compilations have been published, an average for the years 1905 to 1912 and height and weight measurements for 1938. Edinburgh has fuller data, but with some breaks. Similar Glasgow figures are available. By combining the figures for boys aged thirteen and a half years in these three major British cities we can construct the curves shown in the chart and compare them with those that represent Christ's Hospital pupils. The statistics for the three cities fall fairly well into a single curve, demonstrating that they are of general validity for the whole urban population.

In such a comparison it is important to know whether the public-school pupils are a fair sample of the whole population, genetically considered. The number of boys in Christ's Hospital varies between 800 and 1,000; 75 per cent are urban, 25 per cent rural. The family income must not exceed a certain amount, now £500. An investigation of 818 boys made in 1942 showed the following distribution in Orr's income groups: 1.2 per cent in Group I (the lowest); 6.1 per cent in Group II; 36.7 per cent in Group III; 34.2 per cent in Group IV; 14.4 per cent in Group V; 7.3 per cent in Group VI. Dr. Friend writes: "I am confident that these boys represent a typical cross-section of the general boy population. . . . The Christ's Hospital boys do not differ from the general population except in so far as their diets may have been better before they entered and are undoubtedly better while at school."



THE data graphed in the chart permit certain conclusions concerning British nutritional status over the years:

1. A great improvement in health has occurred since the First World War. Among Christ's Hospital pupils the increase in height and weight occurred just after that war, a decade before the similar change in the city schools.

2. At all times the pupils in Christ's Hospital have significantly exceeded boys from the general population. They have weighed at least five pounds heavier and have been two inches taller at age thirteen and a half.

3. In both groups of students the gains made were held through the depression and the Second World War. The basic strength of the British rationing system is thus demonstrated.

4. Since a selected group of boys, not genetically different from the general population but receiving a more generous and better-prepared diet, exceed their less fortunate fellows in height and weight, the latter group cannot have been and is not now optimally nourished. The full biological potentialities of the British people in respect to health have not been disclosed, certainly not in the general population, and probably not even in the selected public-school groups, since height and weight have continued to increase there.

Britain is still far from the dietary goal set by its highest nutritional authorities, but its people may derive a certain assurance from the facts here presented. At the moment they have in general a reserve of physical strength which they did not have during and immediately after the First World War. They have been living at a level considerably above the nutritional minimum which can be endured by a civilized community. They are in a stronger position than a number of Continental areas, some of which are emerging from the winter in a state of near exhaustion. Clear signs of malnutrition are not likely to develop in Britain for some time, provided always that food imports do not fall below 80 per cent of recent amounts. Probably the sterling area can guarantee to keep them at least at this level, with the aid of some American supplies.

But this is cold comfort to a people weary of long hardship, strain, and suffering. In some homes the subtle influences of incipient malnutrition upon mind and spirit will surely manifest themselves before the winter ends. The dread of such deterioration darkens the lives of many millions in Europe. In Britain the ideal of the abundant life, with an optimal diet for full health, recedes into the distance, to be reached, if ever, only after years of struggle. Fully intending social justice, Britain lacks the means to implement its will. This is its tragedy and its challenge.

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How Russia Geared for War

BY ALEXANDER WERTH

Moscow, February 20

N. VOZNESENSKY is one of Russia's big men —a candidate-member of the Politburo, Deputy Premier, and head of the State Planning Commission. His newly published book, "Soviet War Economy During the Great War"—the dual use of the word "war" in the title is not redundant, for, as he often points out, in 1914 Russia went to war without any war economy—is interesting not only for its historical survey and statistics but for the author's political and economic theories on both war and post-war Soviet economy.

Complete state control over labor, raw materials, distribution, and, above all, the means of production are in his view essential parts of an adequate war economy. Without making any reference to Britain in this connection, he attacks those Soviet economists—he has clearly Varga in mind—who tried to argue that in the United States the government had virtual control over production during the war; his reply is that 75 per cent of the state's war needs had to be "intrusted" to a hundred capitalist firms.

The "migration of Soviet industry to the east" at the height of the German invasion in 1941 is generally recognized as one of the great organizational feats of the war. How long in advance had it been thought out? On this Voznesensky is rather illuminating. While various measures were considered before the German attack of June 22, 1941, plans for the moving of industry did not take concrete shape until a few days after the invasion. That the government was not, however, taken entirely by surprise on June 22 is indicated by Voznesensky when he speaks of the large reserves of food, oil, nonferrous metals, and fuel which had been accumulated "just in case" before the war, and which after the outbreak of war were moved to the east. The large grain reserves, he points out, helped the government to maintain adequate and uninterrupted bread rations.

In the last few months of 1941 millions of workers and technical staff were "on the road"; so was the equipment of no fewer than 1,360 large plants, mostly war plants. But as the Russian reparations claims show, much equipment was left behind and ultimately destroyed by the Germans. Toward the end of the Battle of Moscow Russian war production was at its lowest ebb. Hundreds of plants had been dismantled in the west and not yet set up in the east; 303 munitions works alone were out of action. Voznesensky describes the last three months of 1941 as critical.

Yet, "already in March, 1942, war production in the east alone equaled war production for the whole of the Soviet Union in June, 1941." In this the human factor, the "last-ditch" spirit of the grim winter of 1941-42, undoubtedly played an important role; but Voznesensky stresses that human qualities alone would have been totally insufficient, and that Soviet organization was the chief factor in the "Russian miracle" of 1941-42. Anyone who was here during the war years cannot but agree with this. I discussed the matter in detail in a recent book, referring particularly to the foreign misconception that the Battle of Stalingrad was won on "Russian guts" alone.

THE Volga country, the Urals, western Siberia, and Central Asia, including Kazakhstan, became the base of Russia's war industries. The total industrial output of these eastern areas was trebled between 1940 and 1944. Between 1942 and 1944 some 2,250 plants were set up in the east; mighty power stations were built to feed these plants, with their 100,000 machine tools; new mines were opened up, with an annual coal output of 30,000,000 tons, to make up in some measure for the loss of the Donbas. The Urals and Kuzbas became, in fact, the chief source of the coal, iron, and steel for the war effort.

Voznesensky often repeats that only complete state control over everything could have done the trick. By the end of the war the Red Army had four times as many divisions as in 1940, five times as much artillery, fifteen times as many tanks, five times as many planes. In the final battle for Berlin alone there were on the Russian side 41,000 guns, 8,400 planes, 6,300 "breakthrough" tanks; all this, he says, was the work of Soviet industry. In his short passage on lend-lease and other imports Voznesensky says that in 1941, 1942, and 1943 imports from abroad were equal to only 4 per cent of Russia's own industrial output. He thus "shows" lend-lease to have played a part, though not a large one and still less a decisive part, in Russia's victory over Germany. The "4 per cent" is, of course, a purely quantitative statement. In his view what was decisive was that Russia had lived for twenty-five years before the war under the Soviet system. Before industrialization it could not have stood up to Nazi Germany.

Almost as important was the state-controlled *kolkhoz* system, which provided the necessary control over grain production and marketing. By this means the state could

ALEXANDER WERTH is the Moscow correspondent of The Nation *and the Manchester* Guardian.

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enforce labor measures on the peasants, such as a "minimum of working days": the number went up during the war from about 250 to 350 a year. Every possible measure was taken to produce a constant flow of new labor into the factories. About 12,000,000 workers were trained for industry during the war; in addition probably 7,000,000 civilians were used more or less seasonally, under the civilian-mobilization scheme, in building, timber-cutting, and agriculture.

Although much of this new labor was inadequately trained, as Voznesensky readily admits, enough moral and material incentives were created to improve productivity constantly. Among the author's most interesting tables is one showing the man-hours needed in 1941 and in 1943 to produce some of the principal types of armament.

	1941 Man-Hours	*1943 Man-Hours*
IL-4 plane.....	20,000	12,500
152 mm. gun.....	4,500	2,400
Divisional gun.....	2,200	600 (1944)
Medium (T-34) tank.	8,000	3,700
Heavy (KV) tank....	14,600	7,200

Increased mechanization had, of course, much to do with it. Money premiums, too, were important; in the total workers' wage bill premiums represented 4.5 per cent in 1940 and 8 per cent in 1944; the corresponding figures for engineers and technical staffs are 11 per cent and 28 per cent. Voznesensky's figures on the number of women working during the war are also impressive. In agriculture the proportion increased from 52 per cent to 71, and even in the hardest industrial work the percentage rose steeply—in steel foundries from 17 to 31, among riveters from 4 to 12, among dockers from 17 to 40.

MANY of the facts and figures in Voznesensky's book have a close bearing on the recent financial and economic reform in Russia. It first gives some detailed figures on the wage increases during the war. The average wage of 375 rubles in 1940 rose to 573 in 1944; in "hard" trades it rose to 729 (for coal) and 697 (for iron and steel). The average salary of technical staffs rose from 768 to 1,209 rubles; in the coal industry it went to 1,502, and in iron and steel to 1,725.

Rationing, Voznesensky says, worked almost without fail, though on a differential scale. Small farms or even whole *sovkhozes* (state farms) were attached to some plants; these and the individual "Dig for Victory" plots provided extra food over and above the rations. It is plain, he argues, that the state took the best care it could of the worker during the war, though conditions were exceptionally difficult, with about half the grain-growing areas and nearly three-quarters of the sugar-beet areas under German occupation. "Would you have done as well?" he asks.

In peace time the problems are different, and he proceeds to tear to pieces those who "in their illiterate or more often simply slanderous way try to compare the living standard of Soviet workers with that of British or American workers in terms of money wages only."

> To money wages in the Soviet Union must at least be added sick pay, maternity leave, and maternity benefits; paid holidays, free education, stipends, higher-qualification courses, free medical care, the organization of holidays and leisure, child-welfare costs, bonuses for large families. All this constitutes a 38 per cent addition to wages.

Moreover, travel and rents are low—rents only a fifth or a sixth as high as in the United States. And there is no unemployment in Russia, whereas in America or Britain the average wage over a number of years is greatly lowered when unemployment is taken into account. Pre-war American wages must be reduced, he argues, for this reason alone by 32 per cent. He does not claim that the Soviet living standard is anywhere near the American as yet, but Russia is moving in the right direction and America in the wrong direction, and all the present big talk, he believes, will go up in smoke when there are ten million unemployed in the United States. With respect to Britain, he says little more than that the Beveridge Plan presupposes two "inseparable" things—the continuation of capitalism and the inevitability of unemployment. It is therefore simply "an instalment plan for almost every man's inevitable years of misery."

What of Russia's financial record during the war? Voznesensky compares it favorably with the situation during the First World War. Between 1914 and 1917 there was serious inflation; currency circulation went up from 1.6 billion rubles to 23 billion—a fourteen-fold increase. During the 1941-45 war the circulation increased only 2.4 times. He stresses that the banknote issue was a necessary but minor factor in war financing. The war was financed out of revenue and out of the 97 billion rubles of loans and gifts to the Army Fund.

Foreshadowing the reform of December 14, Voznesensky wrote:

> An excessive increase in currency circulation can undermine the incentives to productive work, especially in agriculture. It leads to an excessive, and unsatisfied, demand for consumer goods and to exorbitant prices in the *kolkhoz* markets.

The two price levels that existed during the war he considers a regrettable war-time anomaly, and he also says that, especially up to 1944, the *kolkhoz* markets got out of hand with their twelve- and fifteen-fold increase in prices. These prices were abnormal, as were, for that matter, the ration prices, which remained unaltered—that is, state-subsidized—regardless of cost. Voznesensky confidently prophesies that prices will soon find their

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"normal" level—that is, become almost completely uniform at a level primarily determined by the state, which controls the large bulk of all existing commodities.

IN CONCLUSION he makes some interesting comments concerning the outside world. German reparations, since they represent "only 0.6 per cent of the direct material destruction," can be but a drop in the bucket. They are therefore more important morally than materially. The total losses, direct and indirect, inflicted on the Soviet Union—not counting the incalculable value of the dead—he puts at $357 billion.

Those who wish to trade with the Soviet Union, he says, must remember two things: first, that the Soviet Union is technically and economically independent of the capitalist countries, and, second, that all business with Russia is done through the state monopoly of foreign trade. Since the war Russia, he says, has been reconverting its industries to peace conditions and retraining its workers. Military expenditure represented 32.5 per cent of the budget in 1940, 52 per cent in 1944, and 23.9 per cent in 1946. Still, he contends, because of the ambitions of foreign imperialists Russians must remain "an armed people with a heavy industry."

As if to take the final argument out of the capitalists' mouth, Voznesensky also says:

> The victory of socialism in the Soviet Union does not exclude, but on the contrary presupposes, personal property—the right to own one's earnings, one's house and home, one's domestic economy [meaning some land and livestock], personal comforts, and articles for personal use. The right to own all these things acts, indeed, as an additional incentive in the development of the Soviet economy.

Jim Crow in Missouri

BY HAROLD HAMIL

Columbia, Missouri, February 26

JIM CROW has been around the University of Missouri for a long time. His presence is more or less taken for granted in a state where separate public educational facilities for whites and Negroes are the law. He is not in good standing among the students, however, as was proved by a recent campus referendum on two thorny racial questions: (1) Do you favor the presence of Negroes on athletic teams which visit this university? (2) Do you favor participation of Negroes in extracurricular events, such as debates and mock United Nations assemblies, to which this university plays host?

In each case the vote was overwhelmingly "yes"—2,303 to 539 on the first, and 2,295 to 542 on the second. This was confirmation of earlier democratic expressions by various campus groups but sharply at variance with the official view. When the Missouri Intercollegiate United Nations Conference was held here last November, President Middlebush ruled that the university would not receive delegates from Missouri's Negro colleges. "I regret that the university administration does not have a free hand in this matter," he said. "I admit that the exclusion of Negroes detracts from the universal character of the United Nations conference and weakens the conference. However, as I interpret the [state] constitutional provision calling for separate schools, I believe it also calls for segregation in affairs of this nature."

HAROLD HAMIL is an editorial writer for the St. Louis Star-Times.

After the conference was called to order, it seemed as much concerned with racism in Missouri as with international unity. Speakers went out of their way to point out that Dr. Middlebush's stand was in direct contravention of the principles of the United Nations Charter. The conference went on record as favoring Negro participation, and student leaders made plans to hold the next meeting at St. Louis University, which has been accepting Negro students for two years. Nobody rose to defend discrimination or Dr. Middlebush's interpretation of the constitution. One critic of the university's stand, O. K. Armstrong, a graduate and a former Missouri legislator, said that since Negroes were unable to attend the present session, he considered it his duty to go over to Lincoln University, the state Negro school at Jefferson City, and repeat part of the program at the earliest opportunity.

The St. Louis *Star-Times* threw the state constitution back in Dr. Middlebush's face. The relevant passage (Art. IX, Sec. 1) reads as follows: "Separate schools shall be provided for white and colored children except in cases otherwise provided by law." In an editorial headed "Discrimination at Its Narrowest" the *Star-Times* insisted that "not a syllable of that sentence suggests that Negroes must be barred from student conferences or from visits to the campus." "Dr. Middlebush," it continued, "was not called upon to fracture Missouri's segregated school system. Social equality between races was in no way involved. All that was involved was a principle of logic and justice to which even a John Rankin could be expected to subscribe."

Controversy over the presence of Negro students

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on visiting athletic teams has extended to the whole Missouri Valley Intercollegiate Athletic Association, whose members were known as the Big Six until the recent entry of the University of Colorado made them the Big Seven. The Big Six were the Universities of Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Missouri, and Kansas and Iowa State Colleges. Only Missouri and Oklahoma draw a color line by state law, but there has always been a gentlemen's agreement that the so-called Northern schools would not embarrass Missouri and Oklahoma by taking Negro athletes to their campuses. In theory Negroes could compete everywhere except at Missouri and Oklahoma, but all-white teams have been the rule with all the Big Six. Negro high-school athletes of the region have realized that the association observed a code determined by the laws and customs of Oklahoma and Missouri, and have generally gone to other colleges for their higher education. Thus no incidents have arisen to excite public interest.

The students of most of the member institutions, however, have become increasingly concerned about the color line in athletics, and some teachers have spoken out impatiently. At Nebraska, Iowa State, and the two Kansas schools the students have protested sporadically for years —after all, a lot of good halfbacks and fullbacks were appearing with the neighboring Big Nine. Now they apparently mean business.

Last November Nebraska students invited all members of the Missouri Valley Intercollegiate Association to send delegates to a conference at Lincoln. Missouri and Oklahoma declined, but Missouri's student council sent a resolution favoring the spirit of the conference and supporting the right of any student in good standing at a member school to participate in athletic events at Missouri. Then the council submitted the issue to the student body, with the results I have noted. The full student body has not yet voted on the question at Oklahoma, but the student senate has declared itself, eighteen to nine, in favor of a resolution that Negro athletes be permitted to compete against Oklahoma teams. One senate member reported that he had polled twenty-two Oklahoma football players and that only four objected to playing against Negroes. (The Oklahoma student body, it will be recalled, voted emphatically for the admission of Ada Sipuel.)

None of the large schools of the valley's Big Seven have run as squarely into the race problem as Wichita University, a member of the smaller Missouri Valley Conference, did last season. Wichita had a brilliant Negro halfback, Linwood Sexton, on its roster, but did not permit him to play against Tulsa University—in deference to Oklahoma sensitiveness and the conference code. Tulsa won, seven to nothing, and Wichita's chances for the conference title were ruined. At the annual business meeting of the conference a few weeks later steps were taken, the press reported, to "end all racial discrimination in conference athletics by 1950."

What action will be taken by the larger association will depend on how far students and faculty spokesmen care to go in applying pressure. At the University of Missouri Dr. Middlebush's interpretation of the state constitution must be amended before student opinion can become effective. The University of Oklahoma, it may be presumed, will not tackle new racial problems until the pressing obligations imposed on it by the Supreme Court have been discharged.

In the Wind

SO DOC NIEBUHR says American culture is sick," said the Wind. "Well, let's see." "Where are you going to look?" asked the Candle. "First," said the Wind, "in the editorial column of the Seattle *Times* for January 30":

European Tang to Such Theories of Education

The several reports of President Truman's commission on higher education contain recommendations which constitute a constructive contribution to American educational thought . . . but many will find it difficult to follow the commission in some of its . . . reasoning.

"All too often," one report says, "the benefits of education have been sought and used for personal and private profit, to the neglect of public and social service. . . . Teaching and learning must be invested with public purpose." Here is a philosophy that has a familiar ring. . . . So, in this newer education, the opportunities and aspirations of the individual must be subordinated to "public purpose." Not the individual good, but the good of the state must be served. The old order changeth, yielding place to new. But we remain old-fashioned. Though it was promulgated by a Presidential commission, this is no American program. It has a European accent.

"AND?" asked the Candle. "And," said the Wind, "I recommend a glance at the St. Louis *Register* for February 20":

Some "Great Books" Are Forbidden Reading

Commendable in its general character but dangerous if unregulated is the Great Books movement, which has enlisted the support of many Catholics. This plan . . . demands the reading of something under 100 books, some of which are on the Index. Those on the Index include:

Machiavelli, "The Prince"; Montaigne, "Essays"; Rousseau, "Social Contract"; Hobbes, all works; Spinoza, all works; Locke, "Essay on Human Understanding"; Stendhal, all novels; Gibbon, "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire"; Descartes, "Discourse on Method"; Hume, all works; Voltaire, "Philosophical Dictionary. . . ."

Besides the books on the Index general categories are prohibited. . . . Under this general prohibition would fall the works of Lucretius, Calvin, Marx, and Nietzsche, Mill's "Utilitarianism," and James's "Pragmatism."

For any objectionable work one just as good or better from any point of view may be substituted, as is done in Great Books groups under Catholic direction.

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Del Vayo—Spain and Greece

The Spanish Frontier, February 2

LAST Sunday for the first time in nine years I stood less than a hundred yards from my native land. Leaning against the barrier that shuts off the international bridge, I looked out on the rolling countryside of Spain. The French gendarmes watched me understandingly; I was a stranger to them, but they knew that here was a homesick Spaniard. It was a clear, bright afternoon and I could see Fuenterrabía, where I had passed many a summer. Off in the distance lay the mountain skyline of Navarre, where our family estate used to be. On the other side of the bridge the Spanish *carabineres* paced back and forth under the shameful flag of Franco. I do not know whether the *carabineres* recognized me; certainly my presence in the region was no secret, for the previous evening at Bayonne I had addressed a meeting of Spaniards from the interior and, carried away by the nearness of Spain, had made perhaps the best speech of my life.

But my visit to the Spanish frontier, reopened by the French government a few days before, was more than a sentimental journey. It gave me an opportunity to get first-hand information about conditions inside Spain from resistants who at extreme risk maintain constant liaison with the emigration in France. I need not repeat here the well-known stories about underground activities and the unpopularity of the Franco regime. It is important, however, to note the increasingly rapid disintegration of the Spanish dictatorship and the efforts of American diplomacy to make sure that Spain will remain a satellite that can be easily manipulated to suit its plans.

The key to the disintegration of the regime is contained in the word "corruption." I was already familiar with the story of the generals who in 1939 were living on their modest army pay and are today millionaires, but I thought the black market was largely monopolized by them and the leaders of the Falange. Actually it is universal and runs the whole gamut from illegal currency transactions to the sale of ration cards and bribes to gain admittance to public hospitals. That is why important Spanish financiers are anti-Franco—they have no desire to invest in a virtually bankrupt concern. The little bankers still support the Dictator because their continued existence depends on government favors. All this, I suggest, explains American doubts about including Spain in the European Recovery Program.

The State Department has officially denied recent French press reports that Mr. Culbertson, American chargé d'affaires in Madrid, had requested Franco to "democratize" his regime. Whatever the facts, it is certain that the much-publicized pardon of Señor Alcala Zamora, the aged former President of the Republic, came immediately after the recent hunting party in Andalusia where Mr. Culbertson stalked a few liberal concessions and Foreign Minister Artaje a few million Marshall Plan dollars. The people of Madrid greeted the Zamora decision by chalking a terse comment on the walls of buildings: "We've had enough of pardons for the dead—how about amnesties for the living!" (The former President is only dead politically; he has been living in comfortable obscurity in Buenos Aires.)

Three days after the amnesty decree an official communiqué announced the arrest of resistance committees in Valencia and Madrid. The influence of the American chargé d'affaires will not save them from the firing squad, any more than the personal intervention of Pope Pius XII saved Augustín last December. In any case, the main anxiety of the United States is over Spanish inefficiency rather than Spanish terror. The San Sebastian newspaper *Diario Vasco* reports that trains leaving that city at nine o'clock in the morning do not reach Zaragosa, little more than 200 miles away, until ten in the evening. Clearly Spain's economy is at the breaking-point. Business men of Biarritz, who had long urged the French government to resume trade with Spain, are already disillusioned: Franco has almost nothing to export but hunger, terror, and Nazi agents. Washington has good reason to fear that in Spain as in Greece the generals and officials would be the chief beneficiaries of the Marshall Plan.

The comparison with Greece is one which constantly recurs. A few days before I left for Bayonne I met the diplomat from Athens who furnished the material for my Report on Greece (*The Nation,* January 3). This time he was far less hopeful that American aid could salvage the military situation for the Greek government; in fact, he now seems convinced that both the political and the military situation will deteriorate swiftly in the coming months. According to him the right is exerting terrific pressure on the King to abandon any pretense of a coalition government and name General Papagos, a palace official, as head of a military dictatorship. This proposal is being discussed openly in high army circles, and apparently General Ventiris, who was recently dismissed as commander of the armed forces, is involved in it. If the government's spring offensive fails, as my informant is sure it will, the coup would presumably be timed for May or June. But it would not only drive more or less lukewarm government supporters into the opposition camp headed by Papendreou, the former Premier, and Markesinis, a popular newcomer; it would also greatly increase the appeal of the guerrillas. And the United States would find itself in the unenviable position of supporting another Metaxas regime against the majority of the non-Communist Greek parties.

If General Papagos becomes dictator, the Americans will either have to give him the strong military aid now being demanded by the rightist papers—that is, an American army capable of finishing the job the Greek army has botched so miserably—or withdraw completely from Greece under the worst possible political conditions.

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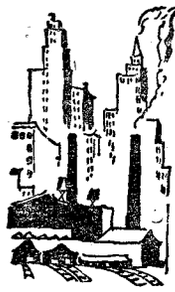

EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS

BY KEITH HUTCHISON

"The Public Be Damned"

HOPES that the recent leveling off of commodity prices marked the beginning of an orderly descent from the inflationary peak have been pretty well blasted by the concerted price increases announced by the steel industry. Although they have been defended as quite a minor change—"nothing to get alarmed about"—these increases are bound to be reflected in the costs of a host of other industries, many of which will feel justified in raising their own prices. The items affected—various kinds of semi-finished steel—are said to account for only 4 per cent of total shipments of steel. This statement, however, is rather misleading, because most of the semi-finished steel produced by the big integrated companies is fabricated in their own mills. The rest is bought by independent processors who, faced with this rise in the cost of raw material, have been compelled to quote higher prices for their finished products. If the big companies do not follow suit, the little fellows will be badly squeezed. That, of course, may be the idea: more probably the present move is the prelude to a general advance in steel prices.

Both the manner and timing of the steel industry's action were reminiscent of the "public be damned" attitude which industry claims to have outgrown. The first announcement was made by the Carnegie-Illinois Steel Corporation, chief subsidiary of United States Steel. Bethlehem, Republic, Inland Steel, and other large concerns followed the bell-wether of the industry without hesitation. By a remarkable coincidence all these companies not only decided to raise prices of certain products by exactly the same amount but were inspired to achieve this increase by switching their quotation base from gross tons to net tons. Thus Carnegie-Illinois posted a price for forging-grade blooms, billets, and slabs of $54 a ton against $55 previously. The joker is that at the new price the buyer receives only 2,000 pounds compared with 2,240 pounds at the old, and actually pays 2.7 cents a pound instead of 2.45 cents.

It is hard to understand why the industry should have adopted this dodge, which is too transparent to deceive anyone. It certainly points to collusion between the different concerns and thoroughly justifies the President's order of an anti-trust investigation by the Department of Justice. Had the price rise been "straight," lesser concerns might have pleaded that they had no advance knowledge of Big Steel's move and had merely followed the leader. But a simultaneous change by all from a gross to a net tonnage basis was surely not brought about by pure mental telepathy.

This kind of thing stinks even in not over-sensitive Republican nostrils. In fact, the G. O. P. is very much upset by the whole affair and with good cause. The steel industry's action came at a moment when Republican legislators were strongly resisting the President's demands for increased authority to control prices and the allocation of scarce materials. They were arguing that inflationary pressures had eased with the slump in commodities, making it quite unnecessary to provide the Administration with new powers. Now they look pretty foolish, while Mr. Truman is in a fine position to say, "I told you so." No wonder that the Joint Committee on the Economic Report, headed by Senator Taft, has summoned the heads of the industry to explain matters and that so stout a defender of private enterprise as Mark Sullivan is growling: "The explanation better be good."

Certainly, explanations offered so far have been far from convincing. The steel companies claim that higher prices are necessitated by the increased cost of raw materials and the rise in freight charges. But they have offered no proof that such increased costs are seriously intrenching on earnings. Possibly, profit margins have shrunk somewhat in the past few months, but with every prospect for continued capacity operations throughout the year, a decline in profits per ton is not inconsistent with an increase in total earnings. The sharp rise in steel profits last year—nine companies recently reporting show an aggregate gain of 47 per cent over 1946—indicates that price increases during the period more than compensated for cost increases.

In the case of United States Steel, total costs, including taxes, per ton of products shipped was $98.3 in 1947 compared to $92.6 in 1946. Nevertheless, net profits rose from $5.85 per ton to $6.25. With a 25 per cent increase in output, that made it possible for the corporation to hoist its income from $88,600,000 in 1946 to $126,700,000 in 1947, a gain of 43 per cent. One contributing factor appears to have been an increase in labor productivity which at least offset last year's advance in wages. The latest annual report of United States Steel, which is more informative than most, shows that employment costs—wages, salaries, social-security taxes, and pensions—formed 42.5 per cent of all costs in 1947 compared with 47.1 per cent in 1946.

This is a point which the United Steel Workers will undoubtedly bring up when they open negotiations for an increase in pay. But in any case it would seem that the steel masters by their action on prices have deprived themselves of their best argument for resisting union demands. Less than two months ago Eugene G. Grace, chairman of Bethlehem Steel, when announcing record profits and a higher dividend, said that if the steel industry had good profits, the best action it could take would be to reduce prices rather than raise wages. Increased wages, he maintained, would start "a vicious circle toward inflation in all phases of industry," whereas "lower prices will be beneficial to industry and the country as a whole." Most responsible labor leaders would agree with that statement; a number of them have said much the same thing publicly in recent weeks. But they can hardly be expected to abate their demands when Mr. Grace gags at his own medicine.

According to a preliminary survey of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the recent slump in commodities has resulted in an average drop of 3 to 4 per cent in retail food prices. If not offset by increases in clothing and rents, this might bring the cost-of-living index down 1½ per cent. That is only a fraction of the rise registered in the index since last spring and does little to reduce pressure on the pay envelope.

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BOOKS *and the* ARTS

The Case Against Wallace

HENRY WALLACE—THE MAN AND THE MYTH. By Dwight Macdonald. The Vanguard Press. $2.50.

THIS timely but formless little book reads like a publisher's inspiration gone wrong. Much of it appeared in the form of articles in Dwight Macdonald's magazine, *Politics*, and when the Progressive Citizens of America decided to make the third-party plunge, it was inevitable that a publisher should want to throw these pieces between book covers, with the quick addition of a little fresh material, a new conclusion, and some miscellaneous scraps by way of an appendix, a postscript, and some "close-ups." The net result is a blast of buckshot, some of it painfully wide of the mark but a good deal of it even more painfully lodged in the hide of Henry Wallace.

Major party campaigners will find the volume a handy compendium of those rash observations that Wallace makes so readily and the next day tries so earnestly to explain or disclaim. A number of these gems dug out by Macdonald pour a revealing light on the third-party crusader. The Munich pact, for example, struck him as a "blessing" to the American farmer, who would be spared the maladjustments of war. As late as 1940 he could write that "even if Germany wins, there is nothing wrong about trading with a German-controlled Europe after the war, so long as we conduct that trade in a way which strengthens our American way of life and our national security." And once we were at war, he seems to have been no more concerned about our aims or post-war plans than General Patton. "That's not a thing an executive should be thinking about these days," he is quoted as saying. "It's like a boy in the middle of a football game letting the dance that night take his mind off playing," a widely held concept for which we are now paying a heavy price.

Since this "football game" there have been a profusion of ill-considered statements, and Macdonald knows how to make the most of them. "For the peace and prosperity of the world," Wallace told a social gathering of newspaper people, "it is more important for the public to know the liberal truth than the reactionary truth. Perhaps some day all of us will be strong enough to stand the real truth." It was perhaps this same concept of "liberal truth" that caused him to rhapsodize about Soviet Asia *before* setting out on his journey of discovery in that region of the world. He subsequently compared Siberia with the American frontier of the last century, making the point that "men born in wide free spaces will not brook injustice" and "will not even temporarily live in slavery," though, Macdonald points out, the Stalin regime has in two decades sent more prisoners into Siberian slavery than the czars did in sixty-four years, and practically all of them for political reasons.

Even more telling for the purpose of the coming campaign are Wallace's political comments over the past year. Until the Russians turned down the Marshall Plan, Wallace hailed it as "what I have been advocating right along." Asked his position on the Truman Administration in January, 1947, four months after his departure from the government, he remarked that two events seemed to him "to strengthen the position of the Administration very materially"—the President's economic report to Congress and the appointment of George Marshall as Secretary of State. And even on his famous tour of Europe he told an American audience in Paris that his differences with President Truman were "not very great," though he had been conveying a rather different impression to strictly foreign audiences, an adaptability which Macdonald shows to be highly developed in Mr. Wallace.

There is a great deal of effective ammunition of this sort, and some still more potent shot in the account of Wallace's relations with Roosevelt. Wallace followers who are given to invoking that magic name the better to heap scorn on Harry Truman are reminded of how Roosevelt ruthlessly fired Wallace from the Board of Economic Warfare and replaced him with Leo Crowley, a utilities magnate of rather lower standing in progressive circles than any of Harry Truman's admittedly vulnerable appointees.

It is good to have these matters spread on the record, and it is good to have Mr. Macdonald's entertaining and persuasive probing of the mind of Henry Wallace, "an attractive and even admirable person" of "decent instincts and intellectual ability who has been perverted by political life." Macdonald's Wallace is divided against himself, by turns "a cold fish" as "sodden and low-spirited as Hoover" and again "wildly exhilarated, often with arm thrown high to an unseen crowd." He is a "Man of Paper, emotionally feeding on paper phrases" and yet longing for the tactile satisfactions of the farm and the laboratory.

While Macdonald's book is more than a cut above the usual campaign document, it misses being a definitive study by a good deal. It is hasty, padded, and sometimes remarkably careless for a journalist of his caliber. For example, David Karr is introduced as a Wallace associate who took "a forty-six-thousand-dollar job in OWI," thereby becoming "one Common Man [who] seems to have found his Century." The epigram is bright, but surely Macdonald should know that $46,000 is more than the combined salaries of the Secretary of State and the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. Nor is the book improved by the inclusion of strained and far-fetched matters that suggest the prosecutor rather than the analyst. Wallace is berated for having allowed himself to be spelled occasionally while presiding in the Senate during a filibuster on the poll-tax bill, the theory being that had he stayed in the chair, "sleeping there if necessary," he might have dramatized the issue or taken advantage of parliamentary opportunities to end the filibuster. The charge is repeatedly made that Wallace has never willingly separated himself from power or the source of power; yet Macdonald, citing Wallace's testimony before the

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Senate committee that was to pass on his nomination as Secretary of Commerce, gives him no credit for an uncompromising pledge to use his powers to implement the President's "economic bill of rights"—a proposition that could not conceivably increase his chance of confirmation. The author admits that the "Zenda" letters "were *probably* forgeries," but he gives more than three pages to them on the ground that "they did not clash with the spirit of much that Wallace had indubitably written." And he is not beyond some rather weird theorizing of his own, such as the linking of Wallace, Upton Sinclair, and Bernard Shaw to show a possible connection between health faddism and a leftist political orientation "highly uncritical of Stalinism." Both indicate a "shallow rationalism which is insensitive to human values." But in spite of these forced flights of fancy and a pretty clear stacking of the case, there is enough explosive matter in the book to blow many a dreamy "progressive" out of the ranks of the third party.

ROBERT BENDINER

The British Story

ENGLAND: A HISTORY OF THE HOMELAND. By Henry Hamilton. W. W. Norton and Company. $6.

IT IS misleading to label this book "England" for the United States, demoting the British title to subtitle. The author is a Scottish professor who rather overdoes filial piety in the space devoted to his part of the island. Surely this was a chance to break the publishers' taboo which is based upon alleged American resentment of the adjective in Great Britain.

Professor Hamilton is a missionary of history. His creed rests on the scriptures of the best historical studies, but the form of his sermon is his own, and he gives the reader ample advertisement of what to expect by his evangelical introduction. He will display "the past as balance sheet of man's increasing command over nature by advancing knowledge and new social technique emerging from the multitudinous activities of practical life" (p. 11); emphasize "our debt to men and women of different social origins and of other nations" (p. 13); and illustrate his belief "that history can furnish us with rational grounds for hope in the future of the human experiment" (p. 19).

He aims to do this by breaking events up into five parts comprising some twenty-two chapter subjects, most of which run roughly from the Middle Ages to now. His internationalism requires the inclusion of short histories of the United States, the Commonwealth, and the Empire, as well as of other parts of the world when their history interlocks with Great Britain's. He provides over a hundred excellent illustrations, five graphic maps (but none of England!), and twenty-four time charts made by J. F. Horrabin, which furnish visual patterns of the interrelated events within the various subject categories.

While Hamilton the social historian cannot begin to compete with G. M. Trevelyan or G. M. Young as a writer, he sticks closer to the majority of the people than Trevelyan ever gets, and unlike Young he is matter-of-fact and substantial for those who want to learn instead of tantalizingly allusive for the initiated. He is particularly good in Parts I and II, Our Needs and Our Work, because he conveys by fresh, well-chosen evidence an intimate sense of how the people have labored and lived. In Parts II and III, Human Relations and Other Human Beings, the eight separate essays, on such things as The Specialist, Communications, and Economic Imperialism, while welcome and frequently unusual, simply break out of their embracing classifications. Gradually the technical difficulties implicit in the book's method begin to emerge. They really come home to roost in Part V, Our Institutions, where the author seems to tire and be defeated by the problem of saying the necessary without some repetition and a lot of uncongenial new matter.

In other words, there are powerful limitations to this kind of history. It is all very well to start out determined to have nothing to do with history as "past politics," but if the British people have been persistently conspicuous for one kind of behavior down to the general election of 1945, that has been political. Hamilton writes about political democracy as if it were something to be denied or turned on like tap water by the ruling oligarchy, whereas it had to be painfully learned by the people in the Trades Union Congress as well as in national politics over two, perhaps three, generations. Or take the politics of empire. Hamilton's readers are not taught to understand the imperialism which was merely strategic—in protection of commerce—or the anti-imperialism concerning colonies judged capable of self-government which characterized both British political parties for at least thirty years of the nineteenth century.

Finally it seems odd to read a socially conscious account of the industrialization of Great Britain without mention of Burns or Blake; indeed, the almost complete omission of letters and the arts must be regarded as injurious. Conceivably the general populace may not have partaken of these insights directly, but many artists sprang from the people, and the greatest artists were those whose genius distilled lasting, often prophetic essence from the circumstances of their times. This volume, therefore, is excellent social, not political, economy and good prose positivism without much poetic insight or imagination.

J. B. BREBNER

Uncorrupted Pragmatist

ANDRE GIDE. By Van Meter Ames. The Makers of Modern Literature. New Directions. $2.

ANDRE GIDE'S first aims have certainly been those of a poet: to discover and define the self, to record a pilgrimage, to convey life and nerve through style. But he has also wanted to teach—that is, to demoralize and corrupt, to disturb all binding complacencies. He has therefore always hoped for young and uninstructed readers: *corruptio optimae optima.* And he has always wanted the critical study of his work to become a debate—an act of understanding but also of youthful resistance.

The role of the demoralizer is not always appreciated, however, especially if the devil be a saint. Most of Gide's French critics have been Catholics and/or traditionalists, pious traditionalists or Catholics on pragmatic grounds. Firmly rooted, these men have merely recorded and condemned Gide's driftings past and away from their own fixed points and fidelities. A few others, recognizing the peculiar savor of this lost soul, have tried to assimilate Gide

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to their own orthodoxies. Unfortunately most of these critics were old and learned men and so almost incorruptible.

Van Meter Ames might therefore seem to be the critic Gide has long awaited. For he is spiritually young, and apparently uninstructed. There is evidence on nearly every page of a mind still eager, still naive, still willing to struggle: "At the end of his rope he would run off to Africa again or just run wild. Then he worried because he was not up to his former wildness." "Lusting after the future breaks up families. They are anchored in tradition, though once nomadic. . . ." "There would be no security for Gide unless he could overcome the devil or find him better than his reputation." "The engineering mind, sneered at by the literary, was moving up the time-table of conscience. A man of letters with a mind like that of Gide could understand." "He was the least sessile of literary men. How he sat enough to do all his reading is a mystery."

I suspect that Gide would honor this roughness above the malicious polish of an Henri Massis. But even Mr. Ames has his inherited orthodoxy—no doubt the commonest and most unflinching orthodoxy in university circles today. It rests on a faith in the Power of Science —especially the Techniques of Research applied to the "value-field"—to produce Democracy and Progress. Freed from their bondage to the past, men will learn "loyal comradery" and the arts and pleasures of "sharing"; they will be devoted to the useful rather than to the illusory good; they will march hand in hand, with a "common conscience," impelled by the "egg of progress"— or, perhaps, rolling on it? They will recognize that art is nothing unless socially useful.

We are not surprised, after the initial shock, to find Gide attached by Mr. Ames to a list of heroes which begins with Bacon and Bayle and concludes with James, Dewey, and Mead; or to learn that his "works are research projects in the value-field." What else can the orthodox pragmatist liberal say? What else is "permissible"? And this pragmatist orthodoxy—here with curious neo-humanist overtones—is perhaps as good as the next one. Like any orthodoxy, however, it can be stultifying and even intolerant. It supplies one with automatic reactions. Push a button, and an immediate opinion—on fascism, on communism, on war, on education—comes out. Or did so until very recently. Mr. Ames's opinions are too inexorably and fashionably progressive; he knows precisely into which future he is rolling.

We can nevertheless detect a mind at work behind the oversimplified opinions. Hence the very real dramatic interest of this book, which is this: Will André Gide finally corrupt and demoralize this Van Meter Ames, this orthodox university liberal, this reasonable and humane man? Will Gide disturb at least once this glowing faith in science, progress, and "sharing"? *Will Gide at last communicate to his critic the meaning of his career and of his books?* The answer, alas, is no. There are moments when Mr. Ames seems to waver, as when he remarks: "That some people are downright selfish and even sadistic must appear as a problem for science to work at." And he is made uneasy by a few of Gide's darkest ambiguities. He tries to legitimize the gratuitous act, but finally has to dispose of it as a proto-fascist idea which Gide outgrew. But he gives no important ground. Rather Mr. Ames interprets all of Gide's oscillations as mere temporary wanderings from a firm homeland of liberalism, progress, social conscience, and science.

The title of this book should be, of course, "The Education of Van Meter Ames." Unfortunately it is presented as a book about André Gide—who said little about science and who detested all forms of pragmatism and all *fashionable* modernisms rather more than he detested the *credo quia absurdum.* Mr. Ames offers a series of speculations on the most important subjects, which he interlards with quotations from Gide. In his eagerness he often neglects to indicate where his own work leaves off and Gide's begins. The following reflections are most emphatically not Gide's, nor have they much to do with the books which apparently prompted them: on Prometheus and progress (pages 44-5), on the relationship of the gratuitous act to the obedience owed the feudal overlord (page 60), on the distinction between the "right" and the "good" (page 61), on the relationship of technology to futurism and to the gratuitous act (page 68), on that of love to knowledge and progress (page 77), on the difference between Baudelaire and Jesus as artists—the latter not seeking luxury, etc. (page 204), on travel as a symbol, for Gide, of the adventure of science (page 234), on the harmony of art and science (page 238), on the role of science in education (page 290).

Mr. Ames is not the first critic to misinterpret most of Gide's books, nor are his misinterpretations deliberate, as were those of so many French Catholics. A few of the books he interprets well. He is of course right to insist on Gide's critical distrust of authority and of comfortable counterfeit personality. And he

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—HARRISON E. SALISBURY, *N. Y. Times*

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RUSSIA AND THE RUSSIANS

by Edward Crankshaw

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has certainly done justice to one of the fifteen or twenty Gides—to the humanitarian optimist of "Les nouvelles nourritures" and of parts of "Oedipe." But does he not see that Gide rejected this position too, as he rejected at last every position which threatened to become simple rather than complex, which encouraged inertia, which conduced to glib and easy affirmation? The other Gides, and the crucial ones, Mr. Ames hardly examines at all: the sexual psychologist of "L'immoraliste" and "La porte étroite"; the pre-surrealist of "Le voyage d'Urien"; the humorist and anti-realist of "Les caves du Vatican"; the pre-existentialist of "Paludes," determined to liquidate the scientism of Taine and Le Dantec and to escape cause and effect. And the artist, who cared first and last for style.

Most of all he ignores that "inner dialogue" of the tormented and divided spirit which perhaps counts "most of all." For this dialogue, which had little to do with intellectual positions taken up and dropped, gives Gide his pertinence and intensity today, makes him seem, indeed, such a microcosm of our schizoid age—the alternating impulses to isolate or protect the ego and to submerge or destroy it, the contradictory temptations of solitude and identification, the attractions of neurotic induced tension and of self-annihilating repose. Gide's real subject matter was this inward division: he elevated a psychiatrist's problem to the level of religious meditation. For Gide was concerned, after all, with no less than the salvation of the *individual soul,* and only infrequently with more. "The only drama which really interests me," Gide wrote, "and which I would relate again, is the contest of each being with what keeps it from being authentic, with what is opposed to its integrity, its integration. *The obstacle is usually within the self. And all the rest is only accident.*" But to examine this drama Mr. Ames would have had to consider the thirty-five or forty years of struggle against a sense of guilt. A book on Gide which takes no account of guilt is a "Hamlet" without the ghost: the most implacable, the most wearying, the most rewarding and energizing of ghosts.

ALBERT GUERARD, JR.

The Critic as Biographer

TWO QUIET LIVES. By Lord David Cecil. The Bobbs-Merrill Company. $3.

ALTHOUGH we not infrequently think of him as a judge, the literary critic is, to be quantitative, at least two-thirds chemist. From time to time, of course, he must convoke his court and render a decision. But usually he is busy sifting and synthesizing in the laboratory of the mind. If he finds that Dr. Johnson is hard and muscular, the critic should isolate the elements of this strength. Conversely, if Mr. Richardson appears to be soft and not a little fatty, it is the critic's business to discover the sources of his subject's flabbiness.

Readers of Lord David Cecil's studies of Cowper and Hardy will know that he excels at this art of literary decomposition. In his latest book, "Two Quiet Lives," Cecil's use of the critical biography is particularly effective. And though his characters are minor, his accomplishment is sizable, for he manages, in a sprightly way, to tell us something about two figures, Dorothy Osborne and

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Thomas Gray, whose literary remains are slight.

No doubt, popular as well as scholarly interest will center on the portrait of Thomas Gray. Those who consider Gray's "Elegy" to represent the highest in poetic excellence will not be upset, though they may be disappointed, by Lord David's conclusions. For he judges that "Gray's life, as it rises before us from letter and poem, was nothing to be ashamed of." However, readers more critical of Gray may find that even here Cecil is overstating his case. To this reader at least, Gray's life, as it rises from letter and poem, is something to be very much ashamed of. It is evident, and Lord David would probably not deny it, that Gray was a prig and a snob, and, in society, a bore. We note with horror that he calls one of his friends "Scroddles," and makes another promise to give up a projected visit to Voltaire. His precautions against fire and burglary and his refusal to take a degree lest he be confused with another Dr. Gray are quaint enough and tolerably funny. But when Gray assures Walpole, who valued and possessed the admiration Gray affected to despise, that "you need not doubt of having a first row in the front box of my little heart," he is more than merely nervous; he is disgustingly obsequious. Even allowing that in the end we must agree with Cecil that Gray is more to be pitied than condemned, we must also note, as Cecil fails to note, that we pity Gray at our own peril. For when we pity a man who, though it is a contradiction in terms, thought of himself as a "mute, inglorious Milton," we are in some danger of allowing our pity to change to sympathy, of thinking, as we doubtless do at times, that we too are mute inglorious Miltons. Pity for Gray is much too close to pity for self to be quite respectable.

Yet if Cecil is perhaps too charitable in respect to Gray, he is certainly not properly enthusiastic about Dorothy Osborne. His interest is too historical for him to be entirely just. It is true, as Cecil points out, that Dorothy Osborne is a sample of some merchandise that has been widely advertised under the trade names of Althea and Lucasta. But the genuine article is far too good to be considered a mere sample of the Cavalier lady. History has nothing to add to Dorothy's portrait of a suitor "whose head is so taken up with little philosophic studies that I admire how I found a room there," or of the girl "sent into the world in order to show that 'tis possible for a woman to be silent." Of Dorothy herself history can only say, with Lord Macaulay, that here is "a charming young woman, modest, generous, affectionate, intelligent, and sprightly." And, since it is now fashionable to amend Macaulay's pronouncements, it may be added that Dorothy is heroic as well.

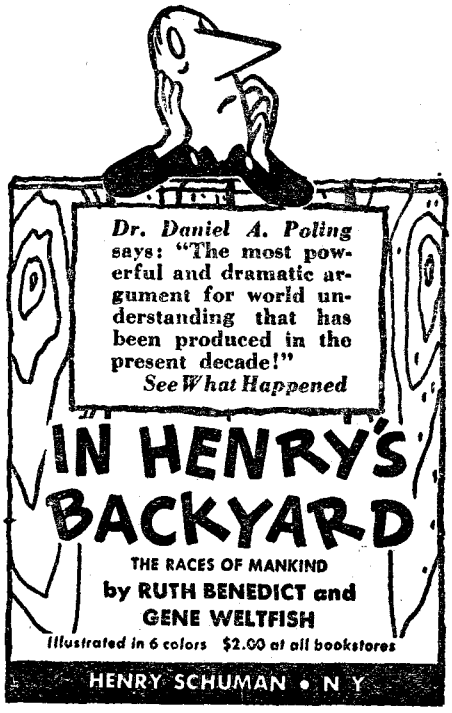
All Dorothy's sunny qualities shine through in Cecil's pages, and if he is a little reticent in praising them, it does not spoil his book. For, clearly, it is a good book. Though it does not violently alter our opinions, it most certainly confirms some uncomfortable suspicions. For we do see and admire two societies that treat politics as gossip, economics as scandal, and natural science as a genial amusement. And we cannot help realizing that after we have solved the problems that seem so pressing to us, after we have changed kings into philosophers and water into gold, we shall still have to learn to live together gracefully and honestly.

JOSEPH KRAFT

Fiction in Review

"THE PATCHWORK TIME," by Robert Gibbons (Knopf, $3), is about a young man, Johnny Somers, aged twenty-one and a high-school teacher of history in a small Southern town, who is taking his first steps away from the parental home and suffering his first adult sexual experience. The title of the book refers to the desperately troubled months which follow from the fact that the young man's long-awaited sexual consummation happens to coincide with the death of his father. Mr. Gibbons uses a variety of experimental prose techniques derived from Joyce and Dos Passos and Cummings to explore the psychic confusion which threatens to overwhelm Somers in his traumatic progress from adolescence to maturity. But unfortunately his psychological probing is very little enlightening, and his method sterile and mechanical rather than freeing. There are two things, however, which save the novel from bogging down in final tediousness. One is an appealing innocence in Mr. Gibbons's approach to people. He conceives the characters in his story with the naive faith in their freshness of someone who has never had even to warn himself against the danger of stereotypes, and the result is that while none of the inhabitants of his small town is a particularly striking or original creation, neither is a single one lacking in some quality of immediacy or hint of stature. The book's other interest lies in its utter refusal of one of the dominant sexual conventions of contemporary fiction.

"The Patchwork Time" deals with the problem of virginity. But according to our fiction, no such problem is supposed any longer to exist; on the contrary, it is assumed that in all sexual situations our heroes and heroines are perfectly equipped to live out the fantasies of ease and power of their authors. This whole business of the changing sexual conventions of literature is, of course, enormously fascinating. Certainly, compared to even two decades ago our fiction would seem to have achieved a complete sexual realism, what with the boldness with which the marital, premarital, non-marital, or adulterous bed is bared to the public eye. And yet the actual fact is that, in a very profound sense, the current novel is as much bound by sexual convention as it ever was. We have simply substituted certain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conventions of freedom for the older conventions of reticence. Thus our present-day romantic hero moves with a sexual directness and assurance as rigidly prescribed for him as was ever the effort for gentlemanly self-control prescribed for his grandfather. Or it is fully as necessary for our present-day heroine to be lively, ready, and withal sweet in bed ("good" is the word used, *ad nauseam*) as it was for her ancestress to blush and tremble outside the bedroom door. Just as a decade of anti-Nazi adventure fiction was built on the pleasant assumption that no man would be in trouble with the Gestapo who was incapable of reading a compass, tracking down fresh water, or binding his own wounds, just so a generation of supposedly realistic fiction conspires in the happy illusion that sexual competence is within the reach of anyone with an arm long enough to embrace the first available partner. One comes to wonder whether the strange conclusion drawn by Dr. Kinsey after his hour and a half interviews—a conclusion so at variance with the observation of the psychoanalysts—that the American male is not at all worried by his sexual problems, is not perhaps an instance of life imitating art; if, that is, it is not possible that Dr. Kinsey's respondents have simply read so many novels in which successful sexuality was taken for granted that only after long hours of self-investigation would they themselves become aware of the fears and miseries which hide behind their assumptions of ease.

In our period, then, Mr. Gibbons's willingness to devote almost a whole novel to a young man's uncomfortable responses to his first adult sexuality is so unfashionable as to constitute a small act of cultural revolution; and one would wish therefore that he had had powers of insight sufficient to support the effort. But it turns out that no more in matters of content than in matters of style is the mere will to be unfettered by literary convention an assurance of meaningful freedom.

I suppose if Alan Paton had written about the American Negro or even about the American Indian in the idyllic vein in which he writes about the Zulus in "Cry, the Beloved Country" (Scribner's, $3), I would be quick to dismiss him as a sentimentalist. But distance from a novelist's materials always seems to produce a large critical latitude, and I found myself much absorbed by Mr. Paton's account of South African life—quite despite its sweet, elegiac manner. I had no idea that the Zulus led such an embattled minority existence, torn between the white culture of the cities, where the pressures of poverty and discrimination are a constant invitation to criminality, and an indigenous life to be pursued only at the cost of a conscious removal from the main stream of civilization. Indeed, as Mr. Paton states it, and one is sure he states it honestly, the problem of the South African peoples, in all its racial, economic, and social complexity, is a perfect paradigm of the modern political dilemma throughout the world. Perhaps that is why such a valid note of tragedy sounds through so excessively lyrical a literary performance.

DIANA TRILLING

Art

CLEMENT GREENBERG

THE Palestinian painter, the fifty-eight-year-old Mordecai Ardon-Bronstein, whose work is introduced to us by a retrospective show at the Jewish Museum (through March 17), impresses this writer at first glance as one of the strongest painters of his generation. It is a welcome surprise to see such high and relevant art come out of a country most of whose cultural products are unavoidably tinged with that provincialism which marks almost all new national self-consciousness.

As is the case with most contemporary Jewish painters, Bronstein's chief direction is expressionist, and in his smaller and lesser canvases there are many reminders of Soutine. However, his best work—especially the apocalyptic and monumental landscapes "Mount of Olives" (1938), which is the finest picture here, "Kidron Valley" (1939), "Bethlehem," (1943), and the smaller "Anatot" (1937)—displays an expressionism modified by cubism. These paintings are brought to the verge of the abstract by their texture, which consists of a multiplicity of cross-hatched little brushstrokes that create a surface in which shapes dissolve, and underneath whose seeming monotony rhythmic variations of hue and value work powerfully. I can think of only one other artist of whom Bronstein's landscapes remind me—the late Arnold Friedman, an American and, again, a Jew, who in the last years of his life approached the abstract by a similar path.

While Bronstein's figure pieces and still lifes seem to me largely unsuccessful because frozen inside expressionist formulas and devoid of the boldness and license with which his landscapes are handled, some of his small later landscapes attain to a flat nakedness and pungency of color that takes them beyond expressionism—I think particularly of the "Yellow Landscape" (1946). But these smaller canvases still fall short of the level of the apocalyptic landscapes. Perhaps no one has answered the sameness of the Palestinian landscape with such pictorial success as Bronstein has in these latter. Far be it from me to see an eternal Jewish soul any more than an eternal Anglo-Saxon one, but there does seem to be some relation between Bronstein's Palestinian pictures and the Old Testament: there is the same hallucinatory monotony, the same intensity applied to broad effects, the same accumulation of parallel or equivalent details around a single obsessively extended theme.

"Equivalent" happens to be the important word here. Mondrian, I believe, was the first to use it with respect to modern painting, and his own art offers perhaps the clearest anticipation of the terminus toward which several of the most important threads in contemporary painting now converge: the even, all-over, "polyphonic" picture in which every square inch is rendered with equal emphasis and there are no longer centers of interest, high lights, or dominating

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forms, every part of the canvas being equivalent in stress to every other part. Texture and surface carry everything, and the picture becomes reversible, so to speak—with beginning, middle, and end made interchangeable. That such pictures should escape collapsing into decoration, mere wallpaper patterns, is one of the miracles of art in our age, as well as a paradox that has become necessary to the age's greatest painting.

The spreading recognition in this country of the fact that its most significant art is tending to become more and more exclusively abstract—a recognition embodied in this year's Whitney Annual and the recent large-scale Chicago Institute show—has begun to provoke a determined counter-reaction. First there was the murmuring of the newspaper critics against the new acquisitions shown by the Museum of Modern Art; then came an editorial in *Art Digest* (a magazine I recommend as an unconscious cultural document) to swell the murmur to an outcry; then Aline Louchheim's hopeful remark in the New York *Times* about abstract art's having been pocketed off by now in a few "specialized" galleries and a little magazine or two in England and this country; and finally the announcement by the Institute of Modern Art in Boston that it was changing its name to the Institute of Contemporary Art because of the "widespread and injurious misunderstandings which surround the term 'modern.'" The institute's statement claims, among other things, that by now "'modern art' describes a style which is taken for granted; it has had time to run its course and, in the pattern of all historic styles, has become both dated and academic." The institute also advertises its intention "to distinguish the good art from the bad, the sincere from the sham, the perceptive from the obtuse. It must also proclaim standards of excellence which the public may comprehend."

It should be explained first of all that no genuine partisan of "modern" or "radical" or advanced art would in his right mind ask for a blanket acceptance of advanced art, though he would argue, and rightly, that art can stay alive only by advancing, "experimenting," and venturing ever and again into what Miss Louchheim calls "extremism." Meanwhile it is up to the critic, the museum director, and the connoisseur to tell the good from the bad, no matter what the school or style. It is just as easy to detect a charlatan when he paints like Mondrian as when he paints like Delacroix. What seems to bother the people at the Boston Institute, Miss Louchheim, and the editor of the *Art Digest* is an unconscious lack of confidence in their own capacity to tell the good from the bad in general; and it is my opinion that, without their art histories at hand, they would feel this lack at the Metropolitan almost as much as at the Museum of Modern Art.

As for the datedness of "modern art"—what, exactly, has come along to supplant it and render it dated? For nothing can be either dated or academic unless something else has appeared to supersede it and make it seem so by contrast. Where, in other words, is the new contemporary art that has made the Institute of Contemporary Art change its name?

As for the public—*which* public? The millions who, as the institute says, find "modern art" something unintelligible and even meaningless? Those same millions also prefer Norman Rockwell to Courbet, and neither the Institute of Contemporary Art nor any other institute will in our day and age ever persuade them to comprehend the standards that make Courbet the one to be preferred.

Drama

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

TONIGHT AT 8:30" (National Theater) consists of six little plays by Noel Coward which are performed in two groups of three on alternate nights. They were, goodness knows, insubstantial enough when first put on in 1936, but they must be blessed with some sort of theatrical vitality if they can seem, as they do, very little less insubstantial than they did three years before even the phony war began. Mr. Coward is no longer acting the roles he wrote for himself, but Gertrude Lawrence is again playing hers—which are, of course, a sort of fantasy on the theme of herself—with the same dedicated air she assumed then. No doubt her obvious conviction that it is a great privilege to be associated with an enterprise so chic and so momentous is in part responsible for the fact that she does her job superbly well. The actor who assumes Mr. Coward's quondam parts plays with something of his predecessor's casual detachment, which seems to be saying, "Of course I don't sing, or dance, or even act like a professional, but who wants to be as vulgar as that?"

No writer has been parodied more often or more successfully than Mr. Coward, and at this late date there is no point in ridiculing the extent to which he exemplifies the follies he is satirizing. Each of his playlets has somehow the air of having been improvised for performance at some very smart party where all the most famous Noels and Gerties and Esmes and Bees have assembled to cry, "But, darlin'," at one another and to bestow such nicknames as "Piggy" and "Bobo" upon even such members of the nobility as have been permitted to come. But at their best they do, nevertheless, have their recognizable quality. No one ever made a small talent go farther, and I do not mean merely in the way of money and notoriety, for when Coward puts no undue strain upon his abilities they are genuine enough. Such a bit as "Hands Across the Sea," though hardly more than a revue skit, is wholly delightful, and its account of the half-hearted attempts of a member of Mr. Coward's own set to be polite to a visiting colonial has real bite. It is only when he attempts to do more that the falseness and the shabbiness begin to show through. "Fumed Oak," which professes to describe the revolt of a dingy clerk against his slatternly wife and her intolerable mother is never anything except Miss Lawrence enjoying the preposterous joke of pretending that she

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is vulgar and without charm. And when the attempt is to demonstrate that we smart people do, believe it or not, have hearts which suffer beautifully, the effect is positively maudlin. Such sentimentality is ordinarily described as beery, but it can no doubt be produced by the more expensive liquids to which these characters are addicted.

Records

B. H. HAGGIN

MY RECENT article about phonographs brought me the anticipated questions about machines which I hadn't written about, from readers who might have realized that if I had heard the machines I would have written about them. It also brought me the anticipated disagreements and rebukes from readers confident that whereas they had got their information and equipment from experts I had got mine from tea-leaves. And just as my article last year brought me contradictory quotations from the reports of "unbiased critics" like Consumers' Union and Consumers' Research and the article on radio-phonographs in *Fortune*, so now I have received descriptions of superior equipment assembled in accordance with what C. R. has said, what C. U. has said, and what Edward Tatnell Canby has said.

The *Fortune* article was a typical example of the *Fortune* method of producing articles—which is to have them written by a writer with no knowledge of any subject, but with the ability to do something called writing, which, in *Fortune* theory, can be applied to any material set before him, and which, in practice, is applied to material obtained by a so-called researcher, who is likewise a person without the knowledge of the subject that one needs when obtaining technical material from the experts, if one is to know, for example, who is an expert and who is not, what the various expert statements are worth, how their differences are to be reconciled. And the article—behind the *Fortune* façade of brashly confident omniscience—was exactly the worthless result that the method is likely to produce.

Nor would I call C. U. and C. R. unbiased; for they have their own special axe to grind: they are out to show that without them you are in constant danger—the danger of buying inferior products, of paying exorbitant prices even for good products, of being poisoned, or electrocuted, or killed by bits of tin from a can opened with a can-opener (the phonographic equivalent of this is a recent C. R. report that lifting records off the spindle of a certain record-changer had enlarged the holes in the records). Why, for example, pay the price of a new Electrolux when you could get a certain rebuilt one that would work as well for half the price? I learned why by buying the rebuilt one that C. U. had specified and discovering, when the armature burnt out after insufficient use, that the rebuilding had been done with other than Electrolux parts. So with radio-phonographs. Why pay Scott, a year or two before the war, the added cost of unnecessary chromium, large-scale advertising, and expensive showrooms—the added cost, that is, of what C. R. and C. U. regarded as sin—when virtue was to be had at less cost in the form of a Philharmonic made, it was true, of excellent components, but—more important—made and sold without advertising in a little third-floor loft in the West 20's. Why indeed? Only for the reason that at this time the sound from the Scott happened to be very fine and the sound from the Philharmonic excruciating. But both organizations gave the Scott their disapproval and the Philharmonic their highest recommendation. And C. R. added to its discussion of the technical features of the Philharmonic a statement that an expert had pronounced the tone excellent; but I happened to know who that expert was, and to know that he was—as he still is—no expert. I am therefore completely unimpressed by C. U. or C. R. ratings "after laboratory and listening tests." Certainly, if C. R. has run a response-curve on a pickup I'll accept it as the curve of the pickup; but one doesn't hear the response-curve, one hears the pickup; and the listening I've done recently hasn't given me new confidence in C. R.'s ear for musical sound.

The listening was done to two new pickups, which I had an opportunity to try with my wide-range amplifier and speaker-system, and to compare with the Brush PL-20 that I've been using several years. One was the G. E. variable reluctance pickup, which an engineer at N. B. C. had thought I would like better than the Brush; the other was the Pickering, about which there had been much said, including a top rating by C. R. The Pickering, it turned out, produced a compact, concentrated, ear-piercingly sharp orchestral sound which the four of us who listened found very unpleasant. Possibly it was what we would have heard if we had been right in among the violins; but the Brush produced in the room something like the softened, diffused sound that we would have heard in the rear of the concert-hall, and we liked it better. As for the G. E., its sound was very good, with only a little sharpness that made us prefer the Brush.

The set-up I described two weeks ago gave excellent performance; but I don't claim that it gave the best possible. A highly placed research engineer with whom I discuss these matters occasionally agrees with C. R. and others that the Brook amplifier, which costs twice as much as the Lafayette, is the finest available; and one might use one of the more expensive and more effective Stephens speaker-systems. As for the Collins tuner, which C. R. rates higher than the Browning, this engineer could give me no opinion, but he assured me that the Browning was as good as one would want.

For those who are interested in an FM tuner, now that Mr. Petrillo has lifted his restriction on FM duplication of AM broadcasts of music, I report that my engineer has tried the inexpensive Pilotuner in his home and found it very satisfactory. He tells me it has a built-in antenna which works excellently in his apartment in a big building on the West Side of Manhattan; but agrees that some form of outside aerial may be necessary in other locations.

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Letters to the Editors

With Fear and Loathing

Dear Sirs: I read with fear and loathing Gilbert Gordon's article, Fascist Field Day in Chicago, in your issue of January 24. How any self-respecting judge and jury could have arrived at such a decision is beyond imagination. For what did we fight a war? For freedom, yes—but for freedom for all peoples. Such a sordid revelation makes one *wish* for an atomic war, to rid the earth of a "civilization" so inhumane, so unjust, so basically wicked as ours.

ELIZABETH MACDONALD

Cleveland, February 5

What Is Treason?

Dear Sirs: The article Fascist Field Day in Chicago, by Gilbert Gordon, in *The Nation* of January 24 concludes with an observation which seems to me altogether shocking: "The classic view that traitorous conduct consists chiefly in selling military secrets to the enemy is philosophically, morally, and legally inadequate."

It is, of course, quite fashionable nowadays among members of the House Committee on Un-American Activities and some others to treat that clause of the United States Constitution dealing with and defining treason as entirely outmoded—or, to put it more urbanely, as "philosophically, morally, and legally inadequate." But *The Nation* is the last place in which I should expect to see this view applauded. Scarcely a feature of the Constitution affords a more necessary safeguard to individual liberty than the stipulation that "treason against the United States shall consist only in levying war against them or in adhering to their enemies, giving them aid and comfort." This is, to be sure, a narrow concept of treason; yet the country has happily survived its inadequacies and has, at the same time, escaped until now the prosecution of dissenters as traitors.

An attempt is being made today to circumvent the treason clause by punishing people for something called disloyalty—an offense not defined by any statute, involving no overt act, and occurring only in the mind. Anything which tends to support this circumvention is extremely dangerous.

I submit to Mr. Gordon that the *Sentinel* would no doubt have been entirely within its rights in calling Messrs. Dennis, McWilliams, Sage, and Deatherage bigots, anti-Semites, or even fascists; but it was not within its rights in calling them "traitors," because it could not prove that they had committed treason. The libel laws are designed to prevent just this sort of loose use of words as epithets; and their protection must extend, obviously, even to the most odious and unpopular of victims.

Mr. Gordon complains that "every juror was expressly questioned on his tolerance of anti-Semitism before being accepted by the plaintiffs," although he appears to think it perfectly proper that "jurors were asked by *Sentinel* attorneys whether they were anti-Semitic themselves." He reports as though it were invalid that the jurors heard "lawyers for the prosecution rationalize religious bigotry as legally proper and morally defensible." Whatever its moral nature, it is certainly as legal as love, hate, or any other emotion, and only an overt act inspired by it could come within the preview of the law. After all, bigotry like beauty is in the eye of the beholder, is it not? There are those who charge *The Nation* with religious bigotry because it published the Blanshard pieces on the Catholic church. My own opinion of *The Nation* is so high that I should expect it as readily to defend freedom of expression for those it considers bigots as to defend its own freedom against bigoted attack.

ALAN BARTH

Washington, February 11

Progressive Catholic Action

Dear Sirs: The Nation's "In the Wind" column for December 27 notes that in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, Catholic priests talked down the proportional-representation method of voting to their parishioners just before Election Day.

I am glad to be able to point out that in Cincinnati last November the Catholic stand was precisely the opposite from that in Pittsfield. Here some of our most effective support came from Catholic officials. For example, not only did priests speak for P. R. in church meetings, but also several strongly pro-P. R. editorials appeared during the campaign in the Catholic *Telegraph-Register,* a diocesan newspaper that is widely read by Cincinnati's Catholics. Most observers agree that without the help of the Catholic clergy the City Charter Committee could not have won its fight to retain P. R.

I hope this account will help curb the tendency among many progressives—including, I'm afraid, *The Nation*—to group all members of the Catholic hierarchy in a stereotype of extreme reaction.

FAUNEIL J. RINN

Cincinnati, Ohio, February 3

Welcome, Pardners

Dear Sirs: In Texas there is an honorable exception to the general run of Southern newspapers, whose treatment of the report of the President's Commission on Civil Rights was in the main accurately described by A. G. Mezerik (Dixie Inventory, January 10). The Austin *Spectator* is publishing the complete text of the report in serial form. The *Spectator,* furthermore, continually protests against the specific instances of discrimination which are the basis of the generalizations in the report. The Sweatt case has been fully covered. So has the refusal of the Mexican government—because of official and unofficial discrimination against its nationals—to renew an agreement for their migration to Texas.

There is still provincial feeling here: Governor Jester's recent statement that "Texans are a race of people" drew little ridicule from the natives. We Texans who have accepted membership in the human race, however, include within the scope of our tolerance Yankees as well as Jews, Negroes, and Mexicans.

Members of the minority groups develop a cosmopolitan outlook through cultural ties with their kind who live in far places. They now rise readily to a challenge like the presence of Gerald L. K. Smith in the community. Last winter Smith attempted to establish a Southwestern headquarters in Fort Worth. He was vigorously opposed by the local Jewish and Negro communities, by leading ministers, and by young liberals speaking through the Young Democrats. He managed to hold one large meeting and several small ones before his financial backers, thirty-two prosperous citizens who insisted that their names be kept secret, withdrew their clandestine support. The only local

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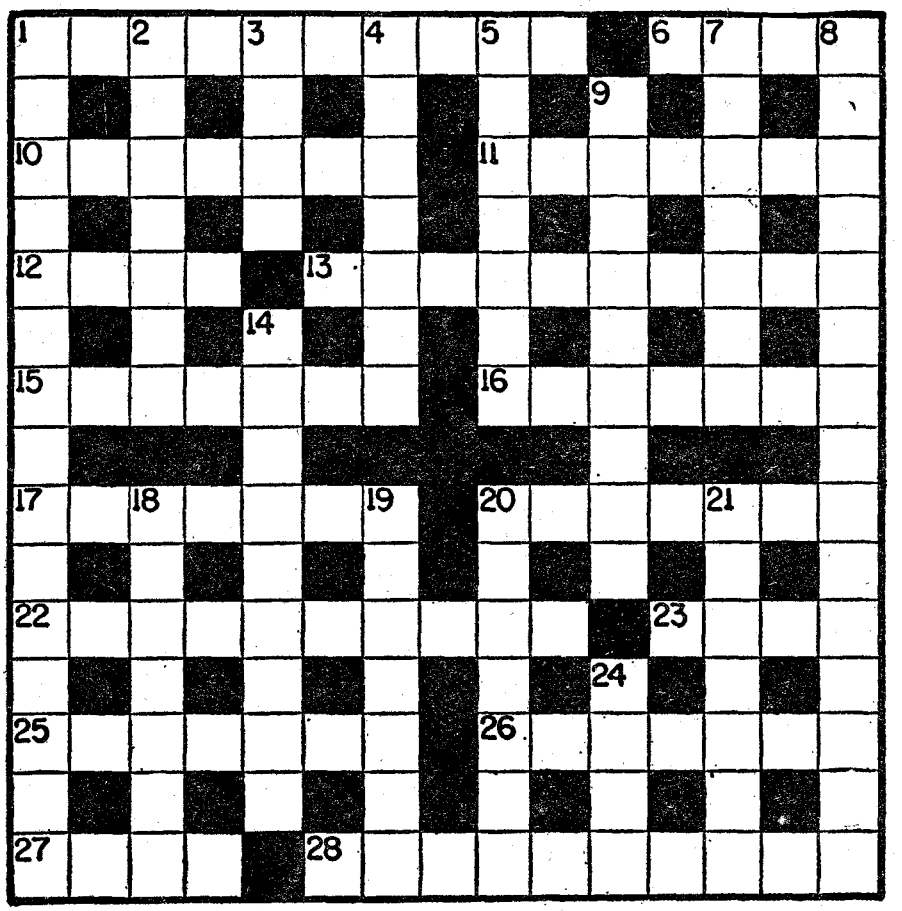
Crossword Puzzle No. 253

By FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 Of, of, of, of, of, of, of, of, of, of. (10)
6 This place seems best in retrospect. (4)
10 I'm coming back when you have the proper sort of candy around. (7)
11 Speak illy, as of itself. (7)
12 Timeless average. (4)
13 Seldom seen without a date, hence often short? (4, 6)
15 Hamlet should contain this kind of cheese. (7)
16 Retired shortly, with a pained expression. (7)
17 The meaning of this is not clear. (7)
20 In favor of something to denote action? (7)
22 Is France in the proper position to expose them? No! (10)
23 Ripe for a change. (4)
25 Beat it! (7)
26 Overcome by force. (7)
27 How a dance winds up? (4)
28 Graduated with many degrees. (10)

DOWN

1 His arms are rather long and powerful. (8, 7)
2 Sunburned fellow? (7)
3 Yes, you are both contrary in Alaska. (4)
4 Perfume to excite. (7)
5 How our name is changed. (7)
7 Neighborhood. (7)
8 Did they charge for electricity? (3, 5, 7)
9 Change a prop into something which sounds apart. (9)
14 Sounds like a baseball team is only half-human, but gloomy. (9)
18 How the committee stands when it hasn't time to sit. (4, 3)
19 Does this look bad? (4, 3)
20 Priests persevere, naturally. (7)
21 Did she look well in black? (7)
24 Had a meeting with the Titanic. (4)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE No. 252

ACROSS:—1 OPPORTUNITY; 9 LIEN; 11 OLGA; 12 PIGALLE; 13 SHOGUNS; 15 EGGPLANT; 16 ZEBRAS; 18 AFRESH; 21 and 10 CHANGE OF HEART; 24 ACCENTS; 26 SCUTTLE; 28 PLEA; 29 HOURI; 30 LEAN; 31 WEST POINTER.

DOWN:—2 PINEAPPLE; 3 OPHELIA; 4 TOAD; 5 NATCHEZ; 6 THONG; 7 AIRING; 8 AGENDA; 14 STOCK; 17 BAGATELLE; 19 FACILE; 20 HATCHET; 22 AUCTION; 23 OILCAN; 25 ERASE; 27 JUNO.

people who publicly associated themselves with Smith were J. Frank Norris, a local minister whose anti-union activities in Detroit have been described in *The Nation*, and a Reverend William Frazier, a little-known and newly arrived Northern agitator. We will cheerfully exchange him for any Northern liberal willing to labor in the Texas field.

Since the administration of Governor Jim Hogg, in the 1890's, Texans have known that the interest of the "foreign corporations" which operate in the state are not identical with those of its people. Walter Prescott Webb's "Divided We Stand" brought us up to the twentieth century, and the liberal Texas weeklies keep us up to date on the extent of "foreign" domination in the state's economy and government.

Recently State Democratic Chairman R. W. Calvert said in addressing a small-town luncheon club that the oil industry dominates the politics and government of Texas. Calvert is not hostile to the oil industry. His state executive committee has been serving the oil men well by making loud noises in support of the coastal states' claims to their tidelands. In introducing the chairman of the state railroad commission, which is also supposed to regulate the oil industry, Calvert was merely trying to suggest the magnitude of the distinguished visitor's responsibility. The statement was picked up by the wire services and featured on the front page of every large daily in the state. It was an irreparable political blunder, for newspaper readers know the statement was true and resent the facts which give it substance.

The "foreign corporations" have the good judgment to promote their special interests through appeals to local pride —for example, the current states' rights crusade about the tidelands. Perhaps Southerners like Hodding Carter are taking a leaf from the "interests'" book on public relations in the South.

Northern liberals who have brains, labor, or money to contribute to the improvement of the South will be welcomed with open arms by home-grown Texas liberals. Our numbers are impressive: in 1946 our gubernatorial candidate, with thirteen candidates in the field, polled a third of the total vote. But our purses are slim, and we must oppose the power of the oil, gas, and sulphur companies which extract irreplaceable wealth from Texas subsoil and invest a considerable fraction of it to keep the natives in their place. JACK CARTER

Fort Worth, Tex., January 24

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